DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 841 HE 010 555

AUTHOR	Bertram, Susan; Sidford, Holly.
TITLE	Final Report on the Cultural Voucher Program.
INSTITUTION	Museums Collaborative, Inc., New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	30 Sep 77
NOTE	99p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Arts Centers; *Community Education; Community Organizations; *Community Programs; Community Support; *Cultural Activities; *Cultural Centers; Demonstration Projects; *Education Vouchers; Federal Aid; Higher Education; Museums; Organizations (Groups); Program Descriptions; Program Development
IDENTIFIERS	*Cultural Voucher Program; New York

ABSTRACT

A demonstration project, called the Cultural Voucher Program, was implemented through support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education of The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The project enabled cultural institutions to reach a new public, develop new educational programs specifically suited to the needs of new audiences, and document their impact on previously underserved groups. Rather than funding institutions to conduct "public" programs through direct block grants, the Cultural Voucher Program awards vouchers to target audiences, enabling them to purchase services of their choice from authorized cultural institutions. Money is provided, in the form of vouchers, to selected cultural institutions. Vouchers can be redeemed for cash by the institutions. Each cultural institutions is also provided a salary with the community groups. Between September 1975 and August 1977, more than 600 separate projects were undertaken by 23 participants. A description is provided of the establishment and operation of the three-year program, and outcomes and future plans are described. Appendices provide a list of advisory council members and project participants, summaries of earnings, project summaries, funding sources, and press articles. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED163841

FINAL REPORT

ON THE

CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

September, 1977

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE, INC.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

HE 010 555

FINAL REPORT

ON THE

CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

Submitted by

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE, INC.

Susan Bertram, Executive Director

Holly Sidford, Cultural Voucher Program Director

30 SEPTEMBER 1977

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW 1

State of the arts: the educational and cultural contenxt for the Cultural Voucher Program.

BACKGROUND 4

Brief history of Museums Collaborative, Inc., and its community-museum projects prior to the Voucher Program.

IMPLEMENTATION 5

Detailed description of the establishment and operation of the Cultural Voucher Program in New York City.

- Year 1, 1974-75 5
- Year 2, 1975-76 10
- Year 3, 1976-77 18

OUTCOMES 25

Major results of the three-year demonstration project.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION 28

Issues left unresolved by the Voucher Program demonstration; future plans.

Table 1: Schedule of Work, 1974-77
Table 2: Critical Elements of the Cultural Voucher Program

APPENDICES

Appendix A	List of Advisory Council Members
Appendix B	List of Participants
Appendix C	Summaries of Earnings: 1975-76 and 1976-77
Appendix D	Project Summaries
Appendix E	List of Funding Sources
Appendix F	Press Articles

OVERVIEW

Over the past ten years, there has been increased recognition that this country's traditional mass education systems--particularly those at the postsecondary level--are not effectively reaching a broad segment of our adult society. Because of their requirements for formal preparation and commitments of large blocks of their students' time, regular matriculation programs often exclude many working adults, minorities and other groups from participating in continuing education opprotunities. The structure and content of many of these traditional collegiate programs, too, frequently appear irrelevant to today's adult student, and fail to engage learners over extended periods.

At the same time that demands for increased flexibility and responsiveness are being made of formal postsecondary institutions, similar requests are being directed to more informal, but in many ways highly traditional, educational institutions such as museums, zoos, botanic gardens, libraries and performing arts groups. As different communities and individuals become more conscious of their ethnic and cultural heritages, the storehouses or agencies of cultural artifacts and knowledge become the foci of increasing interest and attention. In addition, increasing longevity and the shortening of the work week are resulting in increased leisure time for a substantial population of adults. The large majority of these people are eager to spend their increased leisure time in productive and educationally enriching activity, but find it difficult to enroll in education programs requiring matriculation and attendance at regularly scheduled classes.

Museums, zoos, botanic gardens, libraries and performing arts groups are the essential preservers and interpretors of our cultural heritage. Through their physical collections and professional expertise, these institutions

C

possess the potential to offer participatory learning experiences which complement classroom instruction and enhance the public's understanding of the arts, the sciences, and the humanities. Unfortunately, however, the traditional museum approach to educational programming--that is, the development of exhibits, museum tours, lecture series or workshop events without the involvement of people to be served in the planning stages--has resulted in the underutilization of museum education programs, or the total lack of interest in scheduled cultural events on the part of the potential audiences. Given the heterogeneous character of the American public, arts administrators are seldom in position to know which programs are appropriate for various groups; and too often, museum programs place learners in passive roles, defying the modern educational theory that active involvement is a critical component to learning. Increasingly, cultural institutions must become centers for learning which contribute actively and sensitively to the communities in which they exist, and they must reach out to engage the interest and attention of people who have not been part of the arts audience traditionally.

At the same time that requests for more learner-centered educational programming are being addressed to them, American cultural institutions--particularly museums, zoos and botanic gardens--are facing a fiscal crisis unprecedented in their history. Inflation and recession have caused operating budgets to soar, and private subsidy to diminish. Simultaneously, competition for both private and public funding has intensified, and the importance of cultural education programs--when compared with overwhelming social problems--has been questioned. These current economic realities have forced arts institutions to depend increasingly on public rather than private bases of support. Although state and federal support of cultural activities has mutiplied thirty-fold in the past ten years, this public subsidization has been accompanied by democratic demands to broaden the audience served by cultural institutions, expand the educational functions of the institutions, and insure public accountability by providing evidence of impact on a wide cross-section of citizens.

To address these broad public mandates, cultural institutions must bring the range of people they reach into parity with the amount of public subsidy they request, an effort which requires the review of past policies and the design of new ways to involve greater numbers of citizens. With substantial financial support over the past three years from the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, Museums Collaborative, Inc. has developed an extremely successful demonstration project that provides a mechanism through which cultural institutions collectively can reach a new public, develop new educational programs specifically suited to the needs of new audiences, and document their impact on a wide range of previously underserved groups.

Called the Cultural Voucher Program, the project tests a new mechanism for the government funding of cultural institutions which incorporates an important public accountability factor. Rather than funding institutions to conduct "public" programs through direct block grants, the Cultural Voucher Program awards vouchers to target audiences, enabling them to purchase services of their choice from authorized cultural institutions. The Voucher Program provides money, in the form of vouchers, to selected community organizations, who use these vouchers to purchase programs from authorized cultural institutions. The institutions accept vouchers in payment for services and redeem them for cash from Museums Collaborative, Inc. The Voucher Program also provides each cultural institution with a salary stipend for a community liaison staff member, whose job it is to plan and implement projects with the community groups. Through this arrangement, institutions are encouraged to work with new audiences and receive public funds only to the extent that they attract target audiences, assuring that those citizens are served by the arts organizations which their government supports.

The Program is predicated on the theory that once new audiences are actively involved in learning about and with the resources of cultural institutions, they will desire further access to cultural education opportunities. Increased community demands for cultural programs will lead community organizations to allocate portions of their discretionary funds to cultural programs, and a new, more broadly-based foundation of support for cultural institutions will result. In addition, the Program assumes that competition for voucher funds will increase communication among cultural institutions and encourage experimentation in educational programming. Institutions will be rewarded for concentrating on and improving the services they are uniquely equipped to provide, and collaborations between institutions with varied resources will be stimulated.

BACKGROUND

Museums Collaborative, Inc., a private, non-profit arts service agency, was founded in 1970 by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs to assist New York City's museums, zoos and botanic gardens reach a broader public. The Collaborative initially developed programs with the New York City public schools, and with education staffs of museums. These early programs, however, did not address the large heterogeneous, primarily adult population which was not making use of the City's cultural resources. Although these diverse people were difficult to reach on an individual basis, the neighborhoods in which they lived all contained community-based organizations knowledgable about the needs and interests of their consituents. Over a three-year period, the Collaborative experimented with ways to link the human resources of community organizations with the cultural resources of museums, zoos and botanic gardens.

In the area of adult education, the Collaborative originally provided direct grants to museums to develop programs with community groups. Although inventive, many of these programs did not respond to the expressed needs of the groups, and were not always well received. The Collaborative then explored ways of funding community organizations directly to purchase programs of their choice at museums, and discovered that the fiscal instability of some organizations resulted in the use of funds for non-cultural purposes.

The ways in which these early efforts both succeeded and failed suggested a new approach to planning programs with community groups and museums. The Collaborative recognized that control over program content should remain in the hands of the organizations to insure active community involvement in planning and implementing their educational experiences. The financial complications encountered in the early experimental programs suggested that an accounting system should be designed which would enable the Collaborative to reimburse museums directly for their services, thereby eliminating the need for bookkeeping by community groups. In 1974, Museum Collaborative received support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to initiate the Cultural Voucher Program as a three-year demonstration project.

IMPLEMENTATION

Year 1, 1974-75

The Museums Collaborative Cultural Voucher Program began with two stated goals: 1) to broaden the audience served by the City's cultural institutions and, 2) to provide the institutions with incentives to develop programs which are responsive to the needs of a wider public. Although it reflected three years of experience on the part of Museums Collaborative the Voucher Program was viewed as highly experimental when it started in

1974. Cultural institutions were not convinced that community groups would make appropriate use of their resources, and the organizations seriously questioned the desire of cultural institutions to serve them.

To neutralize potential conflicts, and assure constituent representation in policy-making, the Voucher Program administrative staff conducted a reputational survey of representatives from the different kinds of agencies to be effected by the Program, and an Advisory Council for the Program was established composed of community leaders, museum directors, and New York City government officials. The Council has not operated as a "rubber stamp" group, but has participated vigorously in decision-making for the Program. Its initial responsibilities were to establish eligibility guidelines for Program participants; select seven cultural institutions and ten community groups to participate in the Program for the first year; and allocate funds for salary stipends to the cultural institutions and for vouchers to the community organizations.

The Council agreed that the experimental nature of the Program required the participation of established institutions and community organizations. The eligibility guidelines specified that each participant be in existence a minimum of three years, have non-profit, tax-exempt status, and a salaried staff of at least three full-time persons. The Council further advised the staff to undertake a blanket notification of all potential participants to avoid the arbitrary omission of interested groups. A three-step application procedure was designed by the staff and approved by the Advisory Council. Although it was time-consuming, the three-step procedure allowed opportunities for organizations and institutions to withdraw voluntarily from the application process, rather than be rejected by the Council.

After compiling a list of museums, zoos and botanic gardens in New York City, in December, 1974, the staff notified 64 cultural institutions of the Voucher Program. Thirty-three institutions completed the three-step application process, and in February, 1975, the Advisory Council selected seven cultural institutions to participate in the Program. Several considerations were important to the Council's final selections. The applications were reduced to a manageable number on the basis of merit: such criteria as the extent to which each institution was willing to make its resources available to community organizations, the inventiveness of the projects proposed, and the breadth of staff consultation in the decision to apply were discussed. Once fifteen qualified museums were identified, the Council imposed criteria related to the Voucher Program as an experimental project: borough distribution, size and type of collection, and previous experience with community programs were areas considered. The Council attempted to include a broad and representative range of institutions, and the following seven cultural agencies were chosen: The American Museum of Natural History, The Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, The Museum of Modern Art, The New Muse Community Museum, The New York Zoological Society, and The Queens Botanical Garden.

After the participating cultural institutions were identified, the Council allocated museum salary stipends and established the method for recruiting a staff member to serve as community liaison in each participating institution. The staff gathered information on salary and title structures within the seven institutions, and the institutions submitted estimates of their need for full- or part-time positions. Because the museum salary requests exceeded the funds available, the Council considered several alternatives for equitable distribution of stipends, and ultimately resolved to provide the three larger institutions (The American Museum of Natural History, The Brooklyn Museum and The New York Zoological Society) with full-time stipends of $11,000 annually. The four smaller institutions (El Museo del Barrio, The Museum of Modern Art, The New Muse Community Museum and The Queens Botanical Garden) received yearly stipends of $6,600. These amounts included salary, benefits and overhead.

The means by which liaisons would be recruited was the subject of unexpected Council debate. The staff drafted a job description for the position which the Council approved, but the Council's community representatives felt strongly that they should interview final candidates. They were concerned that the museums might not choose individuals who would be sensitive to community needs and priorities. The museum representatives, on the other hand, felt that institutional hiring practices should not be subject to outside veto. After extended discussion, the Council concurred that each institution would be provided with a job description, and would recruit a candidate for the position. A committee of Voucher Program staff and community representatives would interview and approve those selected. Once its liaison was approved, each cultural institution signed a contract with Museums Collaborative and the liaisons joined the staffs of the institutions in early June, 1975.

In some cases, cultural institutions chose as their liaisons individuals who had been working within the institution in other capacities, although several museums recruited people not previously associated with the institutions. For the most part, the liaisons were people with some experience in teaching or educational development, and several had held positions in community organizations prior to joining the museums as liaison staff.

The first responsibility each liaison faced was the development of a descriptive list of resources and services available in his or her institution. Following a format developed by the Voucher staff, each description included a catalogue of the programs open to the public and their costs. Brief explanations of the expertise, resources and facilities available within each museum department were included also. These pieces were compiled and edited by the staff, and translated into Spanish. Entitled "A Guide to the Programs and Resources of Participating Museums, Zoos and Botanic Gardens," the looseleaf notebook was printed and distributed to particpating community organizations to assist them in understanding and utilizing the cultural institutions' services.

In January, 1975, the staff compiled and cross-referenced mailing lists of New York City community organizations from ten public and private agencies. The language of application forms and explanatory materials for the community organizations was pre-tested on community members of the Advisory Council, and was translated into Spanish. Fiscal and organizational problems in the City's Department of Cultural Affairs delayed the notification of community groups, but in April, 1975, nearly 2,400 community organizations were solicited in an initial mailing. Approximately ten per cent of those notified--216 organizations--responded with interest to the initial mailing; 162 of these met the eligibility guidelines established by the Advisory Council.

Because there exists a range of sophistication about proposal-writing among community organizations, and the organizations being sought by the Voucher Program were, by definition, unfamiliar with the resources of cultural institutions, the Advisory Council recommended that opportunities for learning more about the resources of cultural institutions be provided to applicant groups before they were required to prepare written statements describing how museum services might be useful to them. In June, an all-day Community Workshop was conducted at a central Manhattan location, for all community applicants. At the Workshop, Voucher staff explained the voucher system to 76 representatives from 50 community organizations in a general assembly, and staff from each cultural institution made short presentations about their institutions. After a buffet lunch, community organizations moved among small exhibits displayed by the institutions and discussed their ideas and questions with museum staff members and Voucher Program administrators. Following this workshop, 46 community organizations completed the final step of the application procedure.

Year 2, 1975-76

In July, 1975, the Advisory Council selected ten community groups to participate in the Program for the first operational year. Using criteria similar to those applied in choosing the cultural institutions, the Council first reduced the number of applications on the basis of merit: the Council considered the inventiveness of the projects proposed, the availability of cultural resources appropriate to the organization's project, and financial need. Once a group of finalists was established, program-related criteria were applied: borough distribution, size and type of service, community served by the organization, and previous experience with cultural programs were discussed. The Council attempted to select a broad and representative range of organizations. The following ten community organizations were selected:

- The American Indian Community House, an organization founded in 1969 to provide social services as well as educational and cultural programs to the Native American population of New York City.
- Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, an organization founded by residents in the East Elmhurst and Corona neighborhoods of Queens, which sponsors a narcotics rehabilitation program, youth and senior citizens activities, and an alternative school.
- Group Live-In Experience, a crisis intervention center for adolescents in the South Bronx.
- Heights and Hill Community Council, an organization which operates a multi-service program for the elderly living in Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill neighborhoods of Brooklyn.

- Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee, a city-wide organization which develops cultural, educational, and social welfare programs for the New York City Greek-American community.
- Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, a comprehensive service program for senior citizens in the Jamaica, Queens area.
- Manhood Foundation, an organization which counsels and seeks employment for those released from seven New York correctional facilities.
- Mobilization for Youth, an organization which provides cultural, educational and technical assistance programs to residents of Manhattan's Lower East Side, particularly the neighborhood youth.
- Northside Center for Child Development, a family-oriented child guidance center serving emotionally disturbed children and their families in the Harlem and East Harlem communities.
- Tremont Improvement Program, a community development corporation which offers a wide range of social services to the Bronx Park South neighborhood.

To avoid allocating voucher funds to the selected community organizations solely on the basis of their written applications, it was suggested that the Council allocate equal vouchers to all ten groups for a four-month trial period. At the end of that time, the Council could assess the projects underway, and allocate the remaining funds on the basis of performance. Rather than provide equal vouchers to the ten organizations in the second allocation, competition would be encouraged by establishing several levels of funding. It was decided that each community organization would receive an equal voucher of $2,000 for the period between September and December, 1975. In late December, the Council would allocate the voucher funds for the period from January through April, 1976; and in April it would allocate the final portions of voucher money.

By August, 1975, the program participants had been identified, liaisons hired, voucher funds allocated, and the Voucher staff met with representatives from the community organizations and the liaisons as a group to review the accounting and tracking system to be used in administering the vouchers. This system consists of three simple forms:

Service Request Form: Once the details of the project to be implemented by a community organization and cultural institution are arranged, the community liaison completes and signs a Service Request Form. The form includes a brief description of the service to be provided by the museum, the dates upon which the service will be rendered, and an estimated budget. The liaison forwards the form to an officer at the community organization for approval and signature, and then the form is mailed to Museums Collaborative.

Service Report Form: After the project has taken place, the liaison completes and signs a Service Report Form. Similar to the Service Request, this form describes the service provided and includes a final budget. Once approved and signed by the community organization officer, the Service Report is forwarded to Museums Collaborative as an authorization of payment, and the Collaborative forwards the appropriate sum to the cultural institution involved.

Confidential Evaluation Forms: The liaison and community organization officer complete separate confidential evaluation forms on each project undertaken. The form indicates each participant's relative satisfaction with the transaction, and asks whether the participants would be willing to take part in similar activities in the future.

Upon receipt of each form, the Voucher staff records the financial information, reimburses the cultural institution where appropriate, and forwards the forms to the evaluation team at Columbia University, where they are key-punched and tracked by computer.

This system not only collects data for evaluative purposes, but also establishes a formal agreement between the community organizations and museums for each transaction. In the event of later conflict, the language of the original agreement is available for referral. The system also acts as an accounting mechanism to double-check staff records of the expenditures approved by community organizations. Beyond these practical considerations, the use of the computer enables the staff and evaluators to make information readily accessible to all program participants. Such general data as the total amount of voucher funding expended by the ten organizations at each museum, and the overall satisfaction with each participant's performance, is quickly available.

After introductory visits to each participating community organization in September, 1975, the staff withdrew from direct interaction with the groups, and the seven community liaisons assumed major responsibility for making contact with each community group and developing programs based on community needs and institutional resources. The staff felt that it should adopt a passive role in order to facilitate the establishment of direct relationship between museum and community participants. Such direct communication was essential if the Program was to have a positive long-range impact on both kinds of agencies.

The liaisons were provided with all of the application materials from the ten organizations, and were encouraged to initiate contact using whatever mechanism seemed appropriate to their individual working styles and institutional philosophy. The tactics employed by each liaison varied. In some instances the organizations were first approached with a letter detailing the ways in which the museum's resources could respond to interests outlined in the organization's application. The liaisons were not uniformly aggressive and while some began with personal visits to each group, others chose to await an approach from an organization before taking action.

The staff was aware that the liaisons would play a critical role in the successful development of the Voucher Program: theirs would be the daily responsibility for negotiating projects acceptable both to the staffs of community organizations and to those of museums. It was essential that information be freely exchanged between liaisons, especially since they would be isolated from each other, working within their respective cultural institutions. The staff therefore requested the liaisons to meet as a group at two-week intervals. The meetings proved to be effective in facilitating exchanges of information on activities and progress, and they provided a forum where a wide range of problems could be aired and discussed. The ease with which the Voucher Program was integrated into each institution varied, and the liaisons were able to advise each other on methods useful in assisting that process. They also shared their experience in working with the organizations, and helped each other identify and resolve problems. As the Program progressed and the liaisons became more confident and experienced, their meetings were held less frequently, usually in four- to six-week intervals. After several months of meetings, the liaisons' increasing familiarity with the resources of their respective institutions and with the community organizations' interests led them to initiate joint projects. Programs utilizing different resources from as many as three institutions were undertaken, and the three liaisons involved collaborated on designing, budgeting and implementing cooperative services for the community groups.

In September, 1975, the Voucher staff negotiated with the City's Department of Cultural Affairs for the use of a bus to transport community participants to cultural institutions. A bus was put into operating order by the City, and a per diem driver was hired by the Collaborative. Community organizations scheduled the use of the bus on a first-come-first-served basis, with priority given to senior citizens and the handicapped. Those groups which could not be accomodated by the bus were reimbursed by the Collaborative for the cost of using public transportation. The provision of bus transportation proved to be critical to the success of many community projects, because geographical distances in New York City are considerable, and turf boundaries exist in most neighborhoods. Access to free transportation eased the reluctance of many community constituents to travel to new areas.

As the transactions between the community groups and cultural institutions proceeded, the community organizations officers expressed desire to meet as a group to discuss the Program and its effects in their respective communities. At their request, the Voucher staff scheduled monthly meetings for the community groups, in which information concerning the cultural institutions and project ideas were discussed. These community meetings, like the liaison meetings, facilitated the development of collaborative Voucher projects among the community groups, and the community representatives appreciated opportunities to exchange information on community activities and events that were not directly related to the Voucher Program. As the community group representatives became familiar with each other, they began to contact one another directly, and the group meetings were held less frequently.

In December, 1975, the Advisory Council met to allocate additional voucher funds to the ten community organizations. The seven community liaisons prepared written descriptions of the projects each had conducted with the organizations, and each community organization completed a form detailing its planned projects for the remaining eight months of the funding period, and indicated the level of funding necessary to carry out the projects. These reports were reviewed by the Council, which then applied two primary criteria in evaluating the organizations' success. It first considered the number of constituents reached by the project, and then the quality of the experience for those who did take part. The long-range impact of each project was also discussed.

Three organizations demonstrated a clear ability to implement projects which were well supported by their constituents, and which drew heavily upon the resources of participant cultural institutions. It was agreed that these groups would be able to successfully continue their projects without additional review from the Council, and each received the maximum allocation of $6,000 for the full eight-month period between January and August, 1976.

Four organizations carried out projects which, although promising, had not developed as fully as the three previously mentioned. The causes for this ranged from inadequate staff supervision to an inclusive decision-making process which resulted in a slow startup. The Council felt that an eight-month funding decision for these groups was premature, and it allocated $2,000 to each for the four months between January and April, 1976. In April, the Council would review again the performance of these groups, and determine funding for the final four months from May through August.

Three organizations were unable to provide evidence that satisfactory progress had been made in implementing programs. In each case the organization had undergone recent changes in leadership, and an unstable internal situation contributed to the difficulty of establishing effective projects. The Council deferred judgment for thirty days on allocations to these groups. The organizations were asked to remedy the administrative problems which impeded their activities in the Voucher Program during that thirty-day period, and the staff and liaisons were instructed to work closely with these groups during the probationary interval.

All three groups were able to demonstrate progress in implementing Voucher programs within the thirty-day period, and each was allocated an additional voucher sum for the February to April period. In April, the seven groups which had not received full voucher funding were reviewed by the Advisory Council, and additional voucher funds at different levels were allocated for the April to August period. Between September, 1975, and August, 1976, the Council allocated $60,000 in voucher funds, with grants ranging from $3,000 to $8,000. In this year period more than 270 separate projects were undertaken by participating groups. As authorized by the Program guidelines, community organizations spent their vouchers in single institutions, and some used a combination of institutions; the groups purchased existing museum services, and requested new programs geared to their needs and interests; and the resulting programs took place in the institutions and in local neighborhood centers.

In January, 1976, the Advisory Council discussed the possibility of adding more cultural institutions and community organizations to the Program in the summer of 1976. The Advisory Council decided that, depending on the Collaborative's ability to raise sufficient funds, three cultural institutions and five community groups would be added to the Program. The Council determined not to undertake the "blanket notification" and extended application procedure conducted in the first year, however, and favored selecting new participants from a waiting list of institutions and organizations which had applied in 1975. In March, seven cultural institutions were invited to submit updated, revised applications, and all but one chose to reapply. The Advisory Council considered these applications in May, at the same time that it reviewed the performance of the seven cultural institutions that had participated in the Program during its first year.

Prior to its May meeting, each community organization had completed an extensive confidential evaluation of each cultural institution with which it had worked. These evaluations were compiled and summarized by the staff and presented to the Advisory Council for its review. Based on these positive evaluations, six cultural institutions were invited to continue in the Program for another year, and one museum's stipend was suspended for a six-month period, pending improvement of their Voucher Program performance. The liaison for El Museo del Barrio had resigned from the museum in early spring, and the institution had delayed unnecessarily in hiring a replacement. After discussing this situation, the Advisory Council instructed the staff to inform El Museo that its continuing participation in the Voucher Program would be at its own expense, but if the museum could hire a liaison and improve its performance in providing programs to the community organizations, the Council would consider refunding the stipend after six months. El Museo did hire a new liaison, substantially increased and improved its activities with the community organizations, and its stipend was reinstated in December, 1976. This suspension of a cultural institution in the Voucher Program demonstrated a self-correcting mechanism built into the voucher system: the cultural consumers monitor the responsiveness of cultural institutions with their voucher pocketbooks, and the institutions which do not provide satisfactory services do not earn voucher dollars. The effect is immediately obvious.

Although the Collaborative had hoped to add three institutions to the Program for the second year, funding limitations prevented this expansion; and only one additional institution joined the Program in July, 1976. The Council used the same criteria it had employed in the first selection procedure, and chose the Museum of Contemporary Crafts from the pool of re-applying institutions. The Council then assigned the Museum a half-time salary stipend of $6,600; and authorized a 10 per cent increase in the salary stipends to the other institutions. Based on the overwhelmingly positive evaluations of The New Muse Community Museum's performance during the first year, and the high amount of voucher dollars earned by the museum with only a half-time liaison staff member, however, the Advisory Council increased New Muse's salary stipend from half-time to full-time for the second year of the Program.

Year 3, 1976-77

In April, 1976, the ten community organizations which were "runner-up" groups in the original application process were invited to revise and renew their applications. Each group chose to do so, and the Advisory Council considered these application in conjunction with its annual review of the community organizations which had participated in the Program during the first year. In June, each of the seven cultural institutions completed confidential evaluations of each community group with which it had worked, similar to the evaluations of cultural institutions completed by the community groups. These evaluations, too, were extremely positive, in all but one case. Mobilization for Youth continued to suffer from internal administrative changes and problems; it arranged for several programs with different cultural institutions, but community members failed to show up for the planned events; the organization seemed unable to make a strong commitment to the Voucher Program, and no one on the organization's staff took full responsibility for overseeing interactions with the cultural institutions. As a result of its poor evaluations, and the organization's failure to spend much of its voucher allocation, the group was dropped from participation at the end of August, 1976. Six additional groups were selected from the applicant pool by the Advisory Council, bringing the total number of participating community groups to fifteen. The six organizations selected in June to start participation in September, 1976, were:

- Bethany Family Circle Youth Development Agency, a multi-service community service organization, providing counselling, employment, housing and recreation programs for residents of the South Bronx.
- Casita Maria, a settlement house operating one center in the Hunts Point neighborhood of the Bronx and another center in East Harlem, providing social service programs for youngsters, teens and senior citizens.
- Crown Heights Community Corporation, a community development corporation in Brooklyn, offering employment, education, cultural and recreational programs for neighborhood residents of all ages.
- Henry Street Settlement, a multi-purpose settlement house on the Lower East Side, providing educational, economic and clinical services to area residents.

- *Jewish Association for Services to the Aged*, a multi-service agency working with older adults in New York City, Nassau and Suffolk counties.
- *Project R.E.T.U.R.N. Foundation*, a drug rehabilitation program in Manhattan, providing residential counselling and rehabilitation services for drug abusers.

Each of the new organizations was awarded an initial voucher allocation of $2,000 for a four-month period. The organizations which were continuing from the first year were awarded differing amounts of vouchers, based on the liaisons' evaluations of the groups' activities, and each organization's proposed voucher project plans and request for funds. In the second year of voucher transactions (September, 1976 - August, 1977), the Advisory Council continued to review the performance of the community organizations on a four-month basis, allocating $92,280 in vouchers during that year period. As in the first year, voucher awards ranged from a low of $3,000 to a high of $8,000, and the manner in which vouchers were used varied as widely as the community organizations which spent them.

In September, 1976, the staff called together representatives from the 15 community organizations and the 8 liaisons to meet as a group and exchange information as the scond year of the Program started. Liaisons made short presentations of their institutional resources, and the organizations which had been in the Program for a year shared their insights and recommendations for successful interactions and programming with the cultural institutions for the benefit of the entering community groups.

After visits to each participating community group at the start of the second year of Voucher Program transactions, the staff continued to monitor projects and oversee the operations of the Program. During this second year, the staff noted a significant difference in the kinds of programs initiated by the six organizations new to the Program and the nine organizations which had been spending cultural vouchers for a year. In general, the more experienced organizations requested longer, more sophisticated programs, many of which were well-integrated into the groups' other social service functions, and which were designed to have an extended effect upon the constituents involved and their community. For the most part, the six "new" groups--like the original ten groups in the first year--experimented with the cultural institutions' resources, requesting many short-term projects that were intended to expose their constituents to a variety of experiences. Only two incidents--one involving a community organization and one a cultural institution--marred the successful continuation of transactions during the second year of operation, and although both issues were resolved after the termination of the three-year FIPSE grant, they involved instructive dimensions in the Program's structure.

The American Indian Community House was one of the original ten community groups in the Voucher Program, and one of those which had difficulty initially organizing Voucher projects because of internal changes in administrative personnel. The Community House did improve its activities toward the end of the first year of transactions, and the Advisory Council invited the group to continue into the second year of the Program. Again in the second year, however, the Community House failed to organize programs and spend its voucher funds. The Advisory Council appointed three of its members as a subcommittee to visit AICH, talk with the director and staff, and assist the House in determining ways to use its voucher allocation effectively. In addition, the Council instructed Voucher staff members to work closely with the House. Despite the efforts, the AICH continued to have problems using the voucher system. By the end of the second year the staff perceived improvement and recommended that the group be continued into the third year, but the Advisory Council decided that another group might use the Program more effectively and the Community House was dropped from the Program in August, 1977.

The New Muse Community Museum posed other problems for the Program during the second year of its operation. New Muse performed superbly during the first year, conducted more than fifty programs with seven of the ten community groups, and with only a half-time liaison, was second-highest voucher earner. Early in the second year of transactions, however, New Muse's liaison left the Museum, a new liaison was not hired for five months, and the institution conducted no programs for community groups in the Program. Although the Museum was cognizant of the Advisory Council's desire to interview final liaison candidates, a new liaison was hired at New Muse without Voucher staff or Council members' consultation; he was given substantial duties in the Museum in addition to Voucher Program responsibilities, although the New Muse's contract with Museums Collaborative indicated that the liaison's full time and attention would be devoted to developing projects with the Cultural Voucher Program community organizations. The Advisory Council became concerned about this flaunting of Program rules and suspended the Museum from the Program pending a written accounting of the Muse's use of Collaborative salary stipend funds for the period when no liaison had been employed. After repeated requests for this written report went unanswered, the Council decided to drop New Muse from the Program, and the Museum's contract with Museum Collaborative was not renewed in July, 1977, when the other seven cultural institutions' participation was extended for another year.

In addition to monitoring projects and administering the established system of performance evaluation, voucher allocations, and annual review of participants, during the 1976-77 Program year, the staff and Advisory Council turned their attention to the dissemination of information about the Voucher Program and the development of long-range plans for its permanent institutionalization in New York State. Although coverage of the Program in the news media had been difficult to obtain before community-museum cultural projects were underway, by the winter of 1976-77, Voucher

Program activites had generated interest and articles in The New York Times, The New York Post, The Christian Science Monitor, The Daily News, The Soho Weekly News, and Museum News. An additional article about the Program appeared in Craft Horizons and the Post covered one of the projects undertaken by Henry Street Settlement and the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. A 15-minute documentary film about the Cultural Voucher Program was completed in June, 1976, and this film has been shown in all subsequent public presentations about the Program. It has been available for a nominal rental fee, and has been used by the California Council on the Arts, the U.S.I.A., and the National Council on Community Services and Continuing Education.

The staff distributed press articles and other written information about the Program to arts organizations in numerous cities across the country, and to national arts organizations. The Program attracted substantial interest from several cities and states, and the staff was contacted for additional material by organizations in Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Indianapolis, New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, D.C.; and by arts councils in Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, and Tennessee. In addition, arts councils in Minneapolis, Buffalo and Rochester retained Collaborative staff members as consultants to assist them in designing similar programs.

Members of the Voucher staff were asked to make presentations at several conferences, including the annual meetings of the American Association of Museums and the Associated Councils on the Arts, the National Conference on Higher Education, an Arts Administration Conference sponsored by the Huntington, New York Council on the Arts, the Arts and Aging Conference sponsored by the National Council on the Aging, the annual project director's meeting of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and the New England Regional Conference of the American Association of Museums.

During both the second and third year of the Program, the Voucher staff shouldered substantial responsibility for fundraising, and the Program received support from a wide variety of public, private and corporate sources, enabling the Collaborative to meet its commitment to the Program participants by raising $115,000 from other sources during the 1975-76 Program year, and $170,000 during the 1976-77 year.

When Museums Collaborative was developing the initial proposal for the cultural voucher demonstration in 1974, some tentative discussions took place between Collaborative staff and officials from the New York City Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs in which City officials entertained the idea of eventually absorbing the Cultural Voucher Program, should the demonstration project prove successful. By the fall of 1976, when the Advisory Council began a series of discussions about the future of the Cultural Voucher Program, the fiscal crisis facing the City made consideration of a City-sponsored Voucher Program impossible.

In its planning sessions, therefore, the Council considered alternative methods for establishing the Cultural Voucher Program more permanently in the City, and ways of expanding the Program beyond the five boroughs of New York City, into other counties of the State. Both community representatives and cultural institution directors on the Council stated their conviction that participating agencies--both institutions and community groups--should be encouraged to absorb some of the costs of the Program in the future, and that attention should be paid to making the system more cost-effective. There was concensus among the Council members that the Program should be expanded significantly, both numerically and geographically, to test the limits of size and flexibility of the system. In addition, several Council members expressed interest in including performing and literary arts institutions in future Program expansion. Previous discussions the Voucher staff had conducted with leaders at the New York State Council on the Arts encouraged the Council to consider major State Council support as a potential avenue to permanence. After consulting with participating groups to elicit their responses to the proposed changes in the voucher system, the staff worked with Advisory Council members and the evaluation team to develop a three-year plan for the institutionalization of the Program in New York State (see Institutionalization Section of this narrative for more detailed account of these plans). A formal proposal was submitted to the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education in March, 1977, and Museums Collaborative has received support from the Fund for the Institutionalization Project.

OUTCOMES

From its start, the Voucher Program has been evaluated by research teams at Teachers College, Columbia University. The first year's evaluation team was headed by Dr. Charles Kadushin and Dr. Noel Tichy; the second and third year evaluation was conducted by Dr. R. Gary Bridge and Julie Blackman. Although the Final Evaluation Report of the research team led by Dr. R. Gary Bridge is attached to this narrative, the major finding are summarized in the following paragraphs.

More than 600 separate projects were undertaken by the 23 participants between September, 1975, and August, 1977. Costs of individual projects ranged from $5 to $4,500, and the services purchased by community groups included:

Admission to existing programs, tours of exhibitions, landmarks, etc.	7.2%
Weekly lessons in the visual arts, poetry, music and dance.	53.3%
Courses in modern art, anthropology, urban ecology, etc.	22.6%
Technical training in exhibition design, catalogue production, photography, etc.	4.2%
Workshops on topics ranging from fundraising to publicity	12.8%

These figures indicate that, although community organizations did not tend to purchase admission to existing museum programs, they did develop new programs which were strictly educational in nature. This result is confirmed by the staffs of museums in the Program, who have reported their satisfaction with the quality of most projects they have undertaken, and has reassured those who questioned the ability of community organizations to choose intelligently among available cultural resources.

The figures also suggest that community organizations learned to shop effectively for services. Most groups conducted programs with at least six of the eight participating cultural institutions, and one group sponsored more than 87 programs over a two-year period with $15,000 in vouchers, providing a broad impact for a comparatively small amount of money. Although the community groups varied in their successful use of the Program (and one group was dropped by the Advisory Council at the end of the first year and another at the end of the second year because they failed to use the system adequately), the majority made economical and creative use of the institutions.

Also appended to this report are summaries of the distribution of voucher funds during the two years of the Program's operation, September, 1975 - August, 1976, and September, 1976 - August, 1977. These charts reveal interesting information concerning the community groups' use of cultural institutions, and contradict many assumptions that were held by critics of the Program when it started. At the end of the first year of the Voucher Program, one large institution and one small community-based museum earned the most voucher funds from community organizations (The Brooklyn Museum and The New Muse Community Museum), and one large institution and one community museum earned the least (The New York Zoological Society and El Museo del Barrio). Voucher earnings in the first year ranged from a high of $17,191 to a low of $1,545. In the second year, two large institutions were the highest voucher earners (The Brooklyn Museum and The American Museum of Natural History), although a small community museum (El Museo del Barrio) was the third highest earner. In the second year, as in the first, one large institution and one community museum were the lowest voucher earners (The New York Zoological Society and The New Muse Community Museum). Voucher earnings ranged from a high of $29,168 to a low of $4,894 in the second twelve-month period.

The success of a cultural institution in working with community groups probably reflects the energy of its community liaison more than any other single factor, and one museum was dropped in August, 1977, for failure to provide services to participating community organizations, but one important conclusion is implied by the earnings outcomes. Community groups did not make choices based simply on the physical resources, georgraphic location, or ethnic orientation of participating institutions. Their choices reflected the ability of the institutions to deliver responsive services, and two museums (El Museo del Barrio and The Museum of Modern Art) substantially modified their institutional behavior with regard to the community organizations--including hiring new liaison personnel--in order to provide better programs. As a result of these changes, both institutions fared better in the second year of the Program.

Insofar as community outreach is concerned, these results underscore a significant benefit of voucher systems. By funding cultural institutions to conduct "public" programs through direct block grants, administrators or panels make judgments based on institutional images or proposals, with no assurance that services actually will be delivered to people. Through a voucher system, such decision are made by target audiences, based on consumer evaluations of the services actually received. A voucher system therefore incorporates a built-in public accountability factor not present in the standard grant-giving mechanism. In addition, the cultural consumers are actively involved in making choices regarding their learning experiences, and the system rewards institutions which offer successful educational services, while encouraging others to modify their programs to the learners' needs and interests. The confidential evaluations completed by both museums and community groups after each project have been extremely positive; the external evaluation team's Final Report indicates that the Voucher Program has achieved its two basic goals. It has broadened the population of people who are using cultural institutions (the 15 groups in the program together reach an estimated 150,000 people), and the cultural institutions have been motivated to offer new services they would not have developed without the incentive of a voucher system. In addition, many of the community organizations valued their contact with cultural activities enough to allocate their own scarce discretionary funds to arts programs, in some instances matching the vouchers provided by Museums Collaborative. Since most of these groups had no exposure to museums before joining the voucher demonstration, their increased interest can be attributed directly to the Program.

In its first three years, the Cultural Voucher Program demonstrated that postsecondary audiences can make effective use of the educational resources of cultural institutions; and that voluntary, non-formal, learner-centered educational opprotunities provided by cultural institutions are particularly suited to a postsecondary audience that is not being reached by more formal academic institutions or learning arrangements. It also demonstrated that a voucher system is a useful mechanism through which arts organizations can collectively reach a broader public. Further, the Voucher Program confirmed the fact that adult education is a primary concern for both community organizations and cultural institutions, and that learners in community organizations can offer educators in cultural institutions valuable insights regarding the design of particularized educational programs for this varied audience.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

In the past three years, the Cultural Voucher Program has demonstrated that new audiences can make effective use of cultural institutions and that a voucher system is a useful collective mechanism for arts organizations to attract new audiences. A number of crucial questions remain unanswered by the Voucher Program demonstration, however, and these issues need to be resolved before the voucher mechanism can be considered seriously as a new system for the distribution of a portion of the public funds allocated to the arts, on a statewide or national basis.

In its demonstration phase, the Voucher Program fully subsidized the participation of both community organizations and cultural institutions. Such a policy was appropriate to an experimental program, but the continuation of this procedure in the future would limit significantly the number of potential participants--both community organizations and cultural institutions--and would cause the Program to become unacceptably expensive to administer. Over the next three years, the Collaborative hopes to test three major modifications in the Cultural Voucher Program which will reduce the administrative costs and simultaneously expand the number of community groups and arts institutions served.

Briefly described, the proposed changes are as follows:

1) A discounting or sliding scale mechanism will be adopted in the allocation of vouchers to community organizations. As noted above, many of the groups that participated in the first two years of the Cultural Voucher Program valued their new contact with cultural institutions sufficiently to expend some of their own, non-voucher, dollars purchasing additional cultural programs from the eight institutions. This unexpected result during the demonstration phase of the Program confirmed Museums Collaborative's hypothesis that many community organizations would be willing and able to buy vouchers for cultural services. In the future, therefore, more affluent organizations will be asked to provide their own funds for the purchase of cultural services, other groups with less discretionary money will be asked to match voucher funds, and those on the bottom of the economic scale will continue to be subsidized entirely by the Program. Implicit in the decision to adopt a discounting system is the need to expand the types of participating community organizations.

Because of limited funding available during the demonstration phase of the Program, the Advisory Council selected smaller, more "grass roots" groups where funds would have an immediate impact. In the future, larger organizations such as unions, community councils, and umbrella social service agencies will be invited to apply to the Program. This policy change should expand the number of people served by the voucher system, increase the voucher funds available for cultural services, and generate new sources of income for cultural institutions.

The discounting system has been initiated with the 13 community organizations continuing in the Cultural Voucher Program. The Advisory Council considered each organization's assessment of its ability to pay for vouchers and a variety of other budgetary and programmatic information about each group in assigning discount, or subsidy, rates for the coming Program year. In July, the Advisory Council assigned two groups subsidy rates of 50%, seven groups subsidy rates of 75%, and four groups 100% subsidy rates. Most of the organizations which were assigned subsidy rates of 50% or 75% have submitted at least part of their portion of their voucher allocation for the coming year. Fifteen additional community groups will be added to the Voucher Program by January, 1978, and each of these organizations will be assigned a discount or subsidy rate when it joins the Program.

2) The funds provided directly to cultural institutions for liaison salary stipends will be reduced. Implementing the discounting system and increasing the number of community groups participating in the Program will expand the funds available for cultural institutions to earn through voucher transactions. If the amount of voucher funds can be substantially enlarged, the cultural institutions will be asked to contribute a portion of the salary support for their liaison personnel. By adding personnel costs to the expense of voucher projects, the cultural institutions will be able to regain their share of the salary stipend through voucher dollars. The benefit of this policy change will be a substantial reduction in the administrative

costs of the Program, as well as the development of a more direct and efficient system of repaying institutions for services rendered to community organizations.

3) Performing and literary arts organizations will be considered for participation in addition to museums, zoos, and botanic gardens, in order to expand the types of services offered through the Cultural Voucher Program and increase its potential usefulness as a statewide model. Including more cultural institutions will occur after the successful implementation of the discounting system and the expansion of the number of participating community groups. In addition, the voucher tracking and accounting system--which has been handled manually by the Voucher Program administrative staff--will be computerized under the supervision of the Evaluation Team at Columbia University. These changes should enable the administrative costs of the Program to remain stable, thereby improving the overall cost-effectiveness of the Cultural Voucher Program.

The New York State Council on the Arts has indicated strong interest in the Voucher Program's potential. From the Council's perspective, a voucher system if implemented statewide might contribute to the resolution of its *per capita* and decentralization problems. Since the Council now funds only cultural institutions, distribution problems arise annually in counties where the population is large, but professional arts organizations are few. If the Council funnelled a portion of its allocation through a voucher system, community organizations would be eligible for *per capita* funds, and vouchers could be expended in local cultural institutions or in those situated in other areas of the State. The results of the planned policy changes in the Voucher Program, together with the results of a feasibility study of an eight-county voucher system--funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and currently being conducted by Dr. R. Gary Bridge--will form the basis of a major proposal to the New York State Council for the distribution of a portion of its *per capita* funds through a voucher system.

TABLE 1:

SCHEDULE OF WORK

YEAR 1: Design and Initiation

Summer, 1974

Museums Collaborative, Inc. receives grant award from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

Job description for Project Director of Cultural Voucher Program developed and advertised

Interviews for Project Director begin

Fall, 1974

Administrative staff (Project Director, Assistant Director and Secretary) hired

Negotiations for external evaluation of project initiated with Columbia University and New York University

Evaluation team from Teachers College, Columbia University selected; research team headed by Charles Kadushin and Noel Tichy

Staff begins organization of Advisory Council through reputational survey

Winter, 1974-75

Advisory Council members selected and Council convenes to define eligibility guidelines for participants, and discuss application procedures

Application material developed for cultural institutions

64 cultural institutions notified of Program and invited to apply

Comprehensive list of community organizations in New York City compiled

Spring, 1975

Advisory Council selects seven cultural institutions to participate

Advisory Council allocates salary stipends to institutions (3 full-time; 4 part-time)

2,400 community organizations notified of Program and invited to apply

Job description for Community Liaison developed; Liaisons recruited by cultural institutions; final candidates interviewed by Advisory Council

Contracts regarding salary stipends for Community Liaisons signed between Museums Collaborative and seven cultural institutions; Liaisons hired

YEAR 2: Implementation and Testing of System

Summer, 1975

Community Workshop conducted for community organizations applying to Program

Ten community organizations selected to participate

Vouchers allocated to community groups

Participating community organizations and cultural institutions meet for initiation workshop

Fall, 1975

Voucher transactions begin between community organizations and cultural institutions

Staff secures Department of Cultural Affairs bus to transport community participants to cultural institutions

First evaluation report received; evaluation team contract expires

New contract for external evaluation solicited from Educational Testing Service, Saal Lesser Associates, and Dr. R. Gary Bridge, Columbia University

Staff visits community organizations

Staff conducts regular meetings with Liaisons, and group meetings with community organizations

New members added to Advisory Council

Winter, 1975-76

New contract for evaluation study negotiated with Dr. R. Gary Bridge, Teachers College, Columbia University

Vouchers allocated to community groups; voucher transactions continue

Directory of museum services distributed to community organizations

Dissemination efforts begin

Spring, 1976

Advisory Council reviews participation of cultural institutions

6 "runner-up" cultural institutions from initial selection procedure invited to renew their applications for participation

Advisory Council selects institutions to contine from first year and adds one cultural institution

Year 2: Implementation and Testing of System - continued

Spring, 1976 - continued

Salary stipends to continuing cultural institutions increased by 10 per cent

New Liaison recruited, interviewed and hired for cultural institution joining the Program

New contracts signed between Museum Collaborative and eight cultural institutions

10 "runner-up" community organizations from initial selection procedure invited to renew their applications for participation

Documentary film on Cultural Voucher Program completed

YEAR 3: Continued Testing of System; Development of Institutionalization Plans

Summer, 1976

Advisory Council awards final voucher allocations to community groups for first year of Program transactions; transactions continue

Advisory Council reviews performance of community organizations

Council selects nine organizations to continue from first year

Council reviews applications for new groups and adds six organizations to Program

Participating cultural institutions and community groups meet for initiation workshop

Fall, 1976

Vouchers allocated to community groups; transactions continue

Dissemination efforts result in press coverage for Program and staff attendance at professional conferences

Discussions concerning institutionalization of Program begin with Advisory Council and New York State Council on the Arts

Winter, 1976-77

Vouchers allocated to community groups; transactions continue

Advisory Council and staff begin development of long-range plans for Program

Staff initiates discussions with participants concerning proposed "discounting system" in allocation of vouchers to community groups and reduction of salary stipends to cultural institutions

TABLE 1, page 4

YEAR 3: Continued Testing of System; Development of Institutionalization Plans - continued

Spring, 1977

Vouchers allocated to community groups; transactions continue

Staff submits application for Institutionalization Project to FIPSE

Discussions concerning participation in the Program initiated with larger organizations: unions, umbrella social service agencies, churches

Discussions with Program participants concerning proposed policy changes continue

Participating community groups apply for continued participation in Voucher Program and indicate what subsidy or "discount" rate they require

Advisory Council reviews participation of community organizations and selects thirteen groups to continue in third year

Council assigns "discount" or subsidy rates to continuing community groups

Council reviews participation of cultural institutions and selects seven institutions to continue in third year

Council selects one additional cultural institution from waiting list of applicants

Summer, 1977

Museums Collaborative, Inc. receives new grant award from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to begin Institutionalization of Cultural Voucher Program in New York State

TABLE 2:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

- Establishment of Advisory Council, including representatives of the kinds of agencies to be effected by the Program
- Clearly defined and stated eligibility guidelines for both community organizations and cultural institutions
- Blanket notification and careful application procedure for both community groups and cultural agencies
- Selection of broad cross-section of participant groups
- Community Workshop, allowing community organizations to learn about the Program and the participating cultural institutions during the application process
- Liaison personnel, sensitive to the needs and interests of community participants, assigned at each cultural institution
- Regular meetings of Liaisons as a group
- Initial allocations of vouchers to community organizations in limited amounts for short periods of time, enabling community groups to experiment with projects
- Provision of bus service or transportation of some kind for elderly or handicapped participants
- Voucher forms--Service Request and Service Report--detailed enough to serve as contract in case of legal dispute; and tracking process sophisticated enough to compile statistics and double-check staff's manual calculations
- Confidential evaluations of each project completed by community groups and cultural institutions
- Annual evaluations of each community participant completed by cultural institutions, and of each cultural institution by community organizations
- Annual review of participants' performance by Advisory Council

APPENDIX A

LIST OF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

ADVISORY COUNCIL

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

Jack Agueros	President, Friends of Puerto Rico
Courtney Callendar	Director, The Studio Museum in Harlem
Paul Chen	Consultant, Asian Benevolent Corp.
Chrysie Costantakos	Assistant Professor, Department of Social Studies, Brooklyn College
Priscilla Dunhill	Director, Museums Collaborative, Inc.
LaZette McCants	940 Grand Concourse, Bronx, New York
Patrick McGinnis	Chairman, Board of Directors, Museums Collaborative, Inc.
Constance McQueen	Coordinator of Adult Programs, New York City Community College
Richard Oldenburg	Director, The Museum of Modern Art
Federico Perez	Manpower Director, Puerto Rican Community Development Project
Jack Rushing	Vice President, First National City Bank
Nancy Seifer	Director of Community Relations, The American Jewish Committee
Hugh Southern	Director, The Theater Development Fund
Theo Tarantini	Director, Italy America Action Committee
Elliot Willensky	52 Clark Street, Brooklyn, New York

APPENDIX B

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

PARTICIPATING CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
1976-1977

The American Museum of Natural History
Central Park West and 79th Street
New York, New York 10024

The Brooklyn Museum
188 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, New York 11238

El Museo del Barrio
1945 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10029

The Museum of Contemporary Crafts
29 West 53rd Street
New York, New York 10019

The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, New York 10019

The New Muse Community Museum
1530 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11216

New York Zoological Society
185th Street and Southern Boulevard
Bronx, New York 10460

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, New York 11355

-more-

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
1976-1977

American Indian Community House
10 East 38th Street
New York, New York 10016
Dawn Good Elk-Reiker 532-4897/923

Bethany Family Circle Youth Development Agency
1291 Chisholm Street
Bronx, New York 10459
Eloise Sealy 842-3535/6

Casita Maria
928 Simpson Street
Bronx, New York 10459
Michael Jeffers 589-2230

Crown Heights Community Corporation
281 Albany Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11213
Virginia Hicks 735-4330

Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities
98-04 Astoria Boulevard
East Elmhurst, New York 11369
Bill Smith 446-8010

Group Live-In Experience
Community Youth Program
1882 Grand Concourse
Bronx, New York 10457
Denise Minns 294-1889/299-1980

Heights and Hill Community Council
51 Clark Street, Parlor A
Brooklyn, New York 11201
Tom Cummings 596-8789

Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee
31-14 30th Avenue
Astoria, New York 11102
John Kaiteris 728-3598

Henry Street Settlement
265 Henry Street
New York, New York 10002
Mark Tilley 766-9336

Jewish Association for Services for the Aged
222 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003
Samuel Hock 677-2530

Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults
92-47 165th Street
Jamaica, New York 11433
Viola Haywood 657-6500

Manhood Foundation
55 West 125th Street
New York, New York 10027
Leon Modeste 860-1205

Northside Center for Child Development
1301 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10029
Ruth Baum 860-1616

Project RETURN Foundation
64 University Place
New York, New York 10003
Ivan Piovanetti 674-1704

TIP Neighborhood House
2106 Crotona Parkway
Bronx, New York 10460
Sue Boyd 364-7800

-more-

APPENDIX C

SUMMARIES OF EARNINGS: 1975-76 and 1976-77

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Review of Money Spent by Community Organizations
and Money Earned by Cultural Institutions
Through the Cultural Voucher Program
September, 1975 -- August, 1976

Community Organization	Total Allocation	Number of Projects	Amount of Voucher Dollars Spent
American Indian Community House	$3,000.	13	$3,000.00
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities	$8,000.	42	$7,860.42
Group Live-In Experience	$6,000.	28	$4,941.35
Heights and Hill Community Council	$6,000.	23	$5,724.10
Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee	$8,000.	19	$7,505.31
Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults	$7,000.	56	$7,000.00
Manhood Foundation	$5,000.	15	$4,909.81
Mobilization for Youth	$3,000.	14	$2,355.15
Northside Center for Child Development	$8,000.	41	$7,759.56
TIP Neighborhood House	$6,000.	19	$5,661.09
TOTAL:	$60,000.	270	$56,716.79

Cultural Institution	Number Projects	Number of Groups Worked With	Amount of Voucher Dollars Earned
American Museum of Natural History	44	9	$ 9,497.38
Brooklyn Museum	49	9	$17,191.71
El Museo del Barrio	12	2	$ 1,545.00
Museum of Modern Art	35	7	$ 3,685.43
New Muse Community Museum	58	7	$16,452.78
New York Zoological Society	25	7	$ 3,058.00
Queens Botanical Garden	47	7	$ 5,286.49
TOTAL:	270		$56,716.79

19.IV.77

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Review of Money Spent by Community Organizations and Money Earned by Cultural Institutions Through the Cultural Voucher Program

September, 1976 -- August, 1977

Community Organization	Total Allocation	Number of Projects	Amount of Vouchers Spent
American Indian Community House	$3,000.	5	$2,998.08
Bethany Family Circle	$5,128.	9	$4,616.57
Casita Maria	$6,128.	35	$4,281.40
Crown Heights Community Corporation	$3,128.	5	$2,419.65
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities	$7,128.	17	$5,829.31
Group Live-In Experience	$6,128.	11	$6,127.65
Heights and Hill Community Council	$8,000.	45	$7,663.28
Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee	$8,000.	10	$7,901.50
Henry Street Settlement	$6,128.	16	$4,238.56
Jewish Association for Services for the Aged	$5,128.	30	$5,059.84
Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults	$8,000.	33	$7,788.08
Manhood Foundation	$6,128.	6	$5,516.00
Northside Center for Child Development	$8,000.	34	$7,849.50
Project R.E.T.U.R.N. Foundation	$5,128.	5	$5,125.00
TIP Neighborhood House	$7,128.	17	$6,904.34
TOTALS:	$92,280.00	278	$84,318.76

Cultural Institution	Number Projects	Number of Groups Worked With	Amount of Voucher Dollars Earned
American Museum of Natural History	49	12	$20,437.50
Brooklyn Museum	46	14	$29,168.03
Museum of Contemporary Crafts	34	10	$ 6,069.43
El Museo del Barrio	21	6	$8,217.00
Museum of Modern Art	16	8	$7,595.00
New Muse Community Museum	0	0	0
New York Zoological Society	48	12	$4,894.00
Queens Botanical Garden	64	8	$7,937.80
TOTALS:	278	70	$84,318.76

APPENDIX D

PROJECT SUMMARIES

MUSEUMS COLLABORATIVE INC

CULTURAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

SELECTED PROJECT SUMMARIES: SEPTEMBER, 1975 - AUGUST, 1977

Over a two-year period between September, 1975 and August, 1977, well over 600 individual projects were undertaken by fifteen community organizations and eight cultural institutions through the Cultural Voucher Program. This list of Project Summaries outlines some of the exemplary programs sponsored during that period. It is organized alphabetically by community organization.

American Indian Community House

The Native American population of New York City is scattered throughout the five boroughs, and, until fairly recently, no central meeting place existed which was suitable for a variety of activities. The American Indian Community House (AICH) was founded in 1969, and within the past few years, it has received sizeable grants from federal funding sources to assess the needs of New York City's American Indian residents and develop programs which respond to those needs. This support enabled the Community House to move into facilities in midtown Manhattan which include space where cultural activities can be scheduled and exhibitions mounted.

The AICH was among the ten organizations which joined the Cultural Voucher Program in September, 1975, and the major project which the organization has undertaken since that time has been the development of a Native American Gallery on its premises. In its first year in the Cultural Voucher Program, most of the AICH's voucher money was spent providing selected staff members with training in exhibition techniques and gallery operations from curatorial and technical staff at the Brooklyn Museum. During this first year, the AICH also used other funds from its federal manpower grant to pay the American Museum of Natural History for year-long internships in museum work for two constituents of the Community House. In addition, the Board of the AICH committed $3,000 of its operating funds to purchase materials for the renovation of the allotted gallery space. During the 1975-76 year, the Community House also used vouchers to rent ethnological films about Native Americans from the American Museum of Natural History and sponsored an anthropological film series at the House.

During the second year with the Voucher Program, the AICH staff established an advisory council for the gallery, composed of Indian and non-Indian arts professionals, artists, community representatives and Board members; and initiated contacts with other Native American arts institutions around the country. The AICH used cultural vouchers to bring Brooklyn Museum staff members to the Community House to help locate, plan, and display three incoming Native American arts exhibits. These shows were very successful in stimulating interest within the community and many local Native American residents have begun donating personal artifacts to the gallery for safekeeping. Somewhat unexpectedly, the Community House is building up its own permanent collection. The increased activity and interest in the gallery has warranted a new staff position at the Community House for an Exhibition Display Artist who will coordinate activities in the gallery. In conjunction with the development of the exhibit space, the AICH has been compiling a list of local Native American artists, and hopes to encourage some of these artists to teach children in workshops sponsored at the Community House. In this way, the traditional skills of older community members will be passed on to younger generations.

A workshop series featuring Native American artists is being planned as the fourth gallery event.

Bethany Family Circle Youth Development Agency

Bethany Family Circle assists the multi-ethnic Bronx community by serving as an advocate and referral agency for community problems. The Youth Development Agency is an off-shoot of the original "Circle", and concerns itself with helping the community's youth become responsible citizens. The Agency's programs seek to nurture talents and help young people discover suitable, interesting, and creative life-work. Participation in the Cultural Voucher Program since September 1976 has enabled Bethany to expose its constituents to many new opportunities for building skills.

Many of Bethany's young people have not done well in the traditional school system and often have been labelled "problem" children. Through cooperative programming with the museums in the Voucher Program, many of these young people have discovered latent talents. Approximately ten teenagers participated in a year-long series of photography workshops sponsored at the American Museum of Natural History, and learned to take, print, and mount their own photographs. Another group of pre-teens and young adults, both male and female, learned to quilt their own pillows through fabric workshops with the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and the youngsters plan to continue using these new skills to make a large quilt for fund-raising purposes.

Many of Bethany's younger children have nothing to do after school; there are no nearby parks or recreation centers, and the Agency itself does not have sufficient space for recreational activities. The Brooklyn Museum designed a program of jewelry and sculpture workshops for this particular group, and classes took place during the winter and spring at the Museum. To address the problem of insufficient recreational space in the community, Bethany requested the assistance of staff at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in designing a park to replace a local vacant city lot. The Museum has provided teachers to help neighborhood children design an art object for the center of the park as well as a sidewalk mural.

In the past, Bethany has found it difficult to reach the parents of their constituents. As a result of their childrens' experiences in workshops with various cultural institutions, many parents have become more interested in the Agency, and Bethany hopes to schedule classes in the future which involve both children and their parents. Bethany intends to use its next allocation of vouchers to initiate performing arts workshops and music lessons for aspiring teenage bands, to continue an expanded photography program for the intermediate students, and build on other youngsters' past needlework accomplishments by arranging workshops in dyeing, batik, and African weaving. In addition, staff members at Bethany would like to involve community members in making a film examining positive aspects of Bronx life.

Casita Maria

Casita Maria is a 43-year-old settlement house which operates two centers; its headquarters is in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx and it has a branch in East Harlem. The centers have similar programs which focus on the wide range of needs of pre-teens, teenagers, and senior citizens. At Carver in East Harlem, the senior programs serve over 600 members, 150 of them on a daily basis.

Due to budgetary limitations, in the past Casita has not been able to provide as much day-to-day cultural programming for its constituents as the staff would wish. Since they joined the Voucher Program in September, 1976, the Casita centers have sponsored 45 projects with seven of the participating institutions. Initial introductory programs for neighborhood children included trips to the Natural History Museum's Planetarium and Natural Science Center, and the Queens Botanical Garden. These trips led to the development of a series of lectures and workshops conducted for the youngsters at the American Museum of Natural History on "Animal Behavior" and "Small Animals in New York City". The New York Zoological Society contributed to this program by sponsoring a workshop at the Aquarium entitled "Animals Adapted for Survival". This exploration of the natural sciences culminated with a "Behind the Scenes" tour of the Zoo, led by a zookeeper.

Another group of young adults was interested in learning about percussion instruments, and El Museo developed a program through which the children learned to make their own conga drums and are now taking conga-playing lessons. Many of the same children participated in tours of the Carribean and African exhibit halls at the Museum of Natural History, which were supplemented by classes in African storytelling, folk tales, and tribal culture.

A number of projects were sponsored for the senior citizens at both Casita centers, including arts and crafts workshops, classes in ceramics and painting and drawing sessions conducted by El Museo del Barrio. The Museum of Contemporary Crafts sponsored a sewing workshop for seniors at Carver Center, which culminated in the creation of various banners and flags which will be displayed at the Center, used to decorate a van which transports the seniors, and paraded in community festivals. One of the most successful projects for these seniors was a slide and discussion program developed by El Museo called "Back to the Islands", which encouraged seniors to share their recollections of life in Puerto Rico by examining objects and slides from the museum's collection.

Crown Heights Community Corporation

Crown Heights Community Corporation, located in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, is one of New York City's 26 anti-poverty agencies funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. The target area contains 400 square blocks, which are populated by 225,000 multi-ethnic people with a variety of specific needs. The community has been marked by the turbulence of transition, as people have quickly moved in and out of the area. The Corporation operates as a municipality, electing representatives to insure community control of the funds and programs that it administers. Its goal is to erase poverty and stabilize the community by offering technical assistance to its delegate agencies. Any non-profit group within the designated community is invited to present ideas and proposals for using the Cultural Voucher Program through the Corporation.

Most of Crown Heights Community Corporation's voucher allocation was spent on one program. The program was developed by five senior citizens' centers in Crown Heights which decided to pursue a multi-media oral history project of the Crown Heights neighborhood. The staff of the CHCC consulted with the participating cultural institutions and discussed the services which would best suit their constituents' needs. They chose to utilize the expertise of the American Museum of Natural History, which worked with the senior centers in designing a program of art, photography, and creative writing workshops. The project will culminate in the publication of an oral history journal and an art exhibition.

Other projects conducted by Crown Heights included a ten-week painting and drawing workshop for children sponsored by El Museo del Barrio, and special tours of the Zoo for local teenage boys. Before Crown Heights became involved in the Cultural Voucher Program, they were in the process of designing a resource guide of all services available in the Crown Heights vicinity. With the assistance of the Brooklyn Museum, the CHCC staff was able to design, print, and bind a community services publication for circulation within the community. The publishing costs will be partially subsidized by a fee which will be charged per book.

Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities

Elmcor was founded by community residents in the East Elmhurst and Corona neighborhoods of Queens. Its activities include programs for senior citizens, adults, adolescents, and children, and it sponsors a drug rehabilitation center and alternative school. Since September, 1975, more than 60 projects have been planned and implemented by all of these constituents.

Elmcor's youth have been particularly interested in the performing arts. Ten young people in the After-School Program participated in a series of on-site classes on African culture, sponsored by the Natural History Museum. The classes included demonstrations of African dance, drumming, music, and crafts. These sessions led to a more intensive series of classes in African dance for 15 teenaged girls, who then performed as a dance troupe in a number of community events. These classes are so popular that they have continued, uninterrupted, for two years. Another group of young people participated in a series of drama workshops held at Elmcor. The instructor was provided by the New Muse Community Museum and during the spring of 1976, a performance (including excerpts from "Raisin") was given before 180 community residents at the local public library. Vocal instruction was added to the drama training, and the whole Dramatic Arts Program culminated in a performance of the play, "The Me Nobody Knows" in August, 1976.

The Elmcor Senior Citizens Center is a very active organization. Most of its constituents are people who have been busy working all their lives and have not had the time nor the opportunity to take part in cultural, social, and educational events until now. Educational lectures and tours have been very popular with the senior citizens. During the 1975-76 year of the Voucher Program, 25 senior citizens participated in nine workshops at the Museum of Natural History on "Travel to Other Cultures", and also took part in four classes on African culture and tradition. The Museum's material collection, as well as slides, maps and literature, comprised the materials for these workshops. During its second year in the Cultural Voucher Program, Elmcor scheduled other educational programs for the seniors with the Natural History Museum including sessions on

"Gems and Minerals" and "Oceanography." The "Oceanography" workshop was followed by lectures and tours at the Aquarium and the Bronx Zoo. The senior citizens also participated in a four-session "Banner-making workshop", sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. Instructors from the Museum helped them create a felt wall applique inscribed: "Elmcor Senior Center - The Heart of the Community."

Participants from Elmcor's drug rehabilitation program and alternative school took part in photography workshops and special museum tours focusing on the subject of human biology with the Natural History Museum. Others from the school were students in a seven-week animal behavior course at the Zoo which included animal handling, lectures, films, and trips to the Aquarium. El Museo del Barrio responded to an interest on the part of the participants by developing a "Broadcasting and Engineering" workshop for them. The students worked through a two-month basic course in broadcasting which included preparation for taking the Federal Communications Commission test. Many students passed and have received their third-class FCC licenses.

Elmcor used the Cultural Voucher Program to assist in the development of cultural programs that appeal to inter-generational audiences. With instructors from the Brooklyn Museum, they sponsored nine Saturday "drop-in" drawing and painting sessions at Elmcor. Due to the interest generated and the steadily growing number of participants, Elmcor continued the classes, incorporating regular visits to the Museum by children and their parents. The Brooklyn Museum later held a series of programs on African, Caribbean, and American cultural connections involving both young people and senior citizens by using a Black South African graphics exhibition as a base for comparisons between the three cultures.

Group Live-In Experience

Group Live-In Experience (GLIE) is a crisis-intervention center for adolescents from 11 to 17 years of age in the South Bronx. It consists of nine residences, including two units for the multi-handicapped. Most of the teenagers at GLIE have been assigned there by the courts, and GLIE's staff counsels both the youth and their parents in an effort to reunite families when possible.

The staff at GLIE feels strongly that its constituents should develop confidence and ability to participate effectively in in-house activities. A second important objective is to have their constituents exposed to areas of the City beyond their immediate neighborhood. With these purposes in mind, they have arranged programs both at the residences and at cultural institutions in other boroughs of New York.

GLIE began its participation in the Cultural Voucher Program in 1975. During the first year, GLIE worked in conjunction with the American Museum of Natural History and scheduled a range of classes in photography, jewelry-making and African culture. At the New Muse Community Museum, fifteen young people took classes in guitar, piano, drums, trumpet and music theory. The staff at New Muse includes professional jazz musicians, many of whom work at the Muse on a volunteer basis. Jam sessions were arranged in which the GLIE participants could test their newly acquired skills against those of the New Muse staff. Based on the success of the music instruction, GLIE asked New Muse to schedule weekly classes in creative writing, which were regularly attended by six young people. Also during their first year, GLIE collaborated with the Queens Botanical Garden in sponsoring weekly workshops in both indoor and outdoor gardening.

During GLIE's second year in the Voucher Program, many of its cultural plans came to fruition. Through the gardening workshops, approximately twenty teens acquired enough knowledge to enable them to plant an impressive vegetable and flower garden behind one of the residences which yielded tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and string beans. The Creative Writing workshops also bore fruit in the form of a soft-cover poetry publication entitled Love, A Collection of Young Songs. One of the young writers in the publication will appear on Channel 2's national television program, "Lamp Unto My Feet," in a special on runaway youth. Another student from the writing workshop has received her High School Equivalency Diploma and is presently attending college.

Capitalizing on the benefits reaped from scheduling ongoing classes, GLIE has continued many of the first year classes through the second year, in addition to developing new projects. Of the twelve students who continued in the Music Workshops with the Brooklyn Museum, two demonstrated their serious interest by investing in their own guitars. A third student, who is presently at home with her parents, is seeking private piano lessons to continue her education. In the ongoing music classes, the instructors related their music lessons to the visual arts by giving the students tours of the Two Centuries of Black American Art exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. The teenagers enjoyed their tours and were encouraged to experience and discuss this art form for the first time. For their multi-handicapped children, GLIE scheduled all-day programs at the Bronx Zoo and the Coney Island Aquarium in an effort to hasten the socialization process and eventually de-institutionalize these youngsters. Through the Brooklyn Museum, classes in free-style sculpture and painting classes stimulated the student to make verbal presentations and write essays comparing the different media in the two museums' collections.

Next year, GLIE plans to develop photography, creative writing, and crafts workshops, and these will culminate in a gala cultural event including an art exhibition, a drama production, and a fashion show. The writing workshop will be supplemented with a drama workshop which will be conducted with both Poets and Writers, Inc. and The Family, a multimedia production. GLIE plans to add theatre to its arts programming and is in the process of beginning an alternative school for artistic children.

Heights and Hill Community Council

The Heights and Hill Community Council serves approximately 7,000 senior citizens in the Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill area, many of whom live in Brooklyn's single-room-occupancy Hotel St. George. Once New York's largest hotel, the St. George has roughly 1,500 rooms, 600 of which are now occupied by senior citizens. Those living in the Hotel face special problems. Many of the elderly there are frail, and their mobility is limited. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that a subway stops beneath the Hotel, and empties into the Lobby. With no guard service, the residents find themselves vulnerable to repeated robberies.

When the organization joined the Voucher Program in 1975, the staff faced an initial obstacle in pursuading residents to leave their rooms for programs with the cultural institutions. With this problem in mind, the Heights and Hill staff planned projects that could be conducted in, or nearby, the Hotel. Through the American Museum of Natural History, slide shows on art and other cultures were developed in the first year of participation, and these programs have continued in the Hotel for those who choose to stay near their rooms. Through the Museum of Modern Art, Heights and Hill scheduled a series of silent and early sound films in the winter of 1975/76 which were shown at a center near the Hotel, so that other senior citizens could attend the viewing. Audiences ranged from forty to sixty seniors at each screening. A member of the Museum staff prepared film notes for distribution, and was present to discuss each film shown. An exciting aspect of this project was the discovery that one of the residents of the St. George is an actress who had a small part in F.W. Murneau's "Sunrise," one of the silent films shown. She attended the viewing, and discussed her experiences in making the film.

When the staff of Heights and Hill first scheduled four classes in windowsill gardening with the Queens Botanical Garden, they never expected the number of people that showed up at the room adjoining the Hotel Lobby (an average of 45 people came to each class). This response encouraged the staff to attempt projects outside the Hotel. In the course of their second year in the Program, 17 additional workshops were held at the Garden as well as in the Hotel, on such topics as "Bonsai," "Sachets," and "Cactus Grafting." The success of the projects at the Garden convinced Heights and Hill to sponsor programs with the Bronx Zoo. Initially, the Zoo made two outreach visits, bringing live animals to the Hotel. The seniors then began visiting the Zoo in groups. Zoo visits have been so successful that Heights and Hill plans to hold their annual picnic at the zoo every year.

A docent program, which was sponsored initially at the Garden to train senior volunteers to make "plant visits" to the homebound, expanded during the second year to include docent training in drawing and painting at the Brooklyn Museum. The ten senior citizens who participated in these docent programs taught their skills to twenty Nursing Home residents in a series of six sessions with each resident. They hope to expand the docent program next year to reach more shut-ins in the community.

A lecturer from the Brooklyn Museum organized walking and riding tours of historical sites and architectural landmarks in Brooklyn during Heights and Hill's first year in the Voucher Program. The project included a visit to the Museum's Sculpture Garden, which is composed of ornaments taken from demolished buildings in New York City. These tours triggered recollections of Old Brooklyn, and soon led to the planning of a unique oral history project for the organization's second year in the Program. This project eventually culminated in a show at the Brooklyn Museum's Community Gallery. A museum staff member worked very closely with Heights and Hill tape recording senior citizen "reminiscence" discussion groups, and taping private interviews with seniors in their homes. Landmark tours of Brooklyn, including neighborhoods where the senior citizens in the project grew up, also triggered memories of childhood in a very different Brooklyn, and those memories were recorded also. The Brooklyn Museum reviewed the tapes, identified themes and helped the fifteen senior citizens assemble momentos and do research around those themes. With the help of the Brooklyn Museum's display artists, "Memories: Brooklyn 1900-1930" opened in April, 1977, and ran for one month. The splendid exhibit included photographs, memorabilia, and a continuous video tape showing of seniors' memories of a bygone Brooklyn that they would like to see remain, in recorded history, as part of Brooklyn today. The exhibition will tour several other community sites, after which the Heights and Hill staff hopes it will be displayed permanently at the St. George Hotel.

In the first two years of their association with the Cultural Voucher Program, the staff of Heights and Hill has been using their vouchers for specially designed programs for their constituents. In the coming year, they hope to encourage more extensive participation in the cultural institutions' regular programs, and to generate leadership among senior citizens who might be interested in becoming volunteer tour guides at the Brooklyn Museum.

Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee

The Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee (HANAC) develops cultural, educational, and social welfare programs for New York's growing Greek-American community. HANAC was among the first ten organizations chosen to participate in the Voucher demonstration and since September, 1975, has spent most of its voucher allocations on one major program: the Greek-American Artists Project. One of HANAC's long-range goals is the establishment of a community gallery in Astoria, to show work by Greek and Greek-American artists. In order to accomplish this goal, HANAC developed a three-part program involving the training of community members in exhibition techniques, the development of a directory of Greek-American artists and the preparation of a show of New York City Greek-American artists' work.

In cooperation with the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, HANAC trained two community interns in exhibition techniques and gallery operations. At the Brooklyn Museum's Community Gallery, the training program covered such topics as exhibition design, selection considerations, installation, handling and dismantling procedures. The training also included sessions at commercial and community-run galleries. At the Museum of Modern Art, the interns were taught how to catalogue works of art, and learned several aspects of caring for and storing objects.

The interns used the skills they had acquired in the training program in a show of Greek-American artists' work. Fourteen of New York City's contemporary Greek-American artists were represented in the exhibition entitled NOEMATA ("a product of one's mind"), which ran from May 1 to June 5, 1977, at the Community Gallery of the Brooklyn Museum. Coordination of this event included the design and publication of a catalogue and poster for the show.

The interns have used other skills learned from the museums to put together a catalogue of well-known Greek-American artists, many of whom reside in New York City. HANAC plans to build a national directory of Greek artists, including artists of Greek descent who are just beginning careers as artists.

To supervise the development of the gallery and cultural center in Astoria, HANAC has established an advisory committee composed of Greeks and Greek-Americans. The organization recently secured a one-year public employment position for a Cultural Coordinator. This new staff person will be working with the Greek community to plan cultural programs in performing arts, create a travelling outdoor exhibit, and investigate the ways in which cultural institutions participating in the Cultural Voucher Program might assist HANAC staff further in developing the gallery.

Although HANAC has not yet acquired the physical space for its own gallery and cultural center, the participation in the Voucher Program has enabled the group to pursue the goal of generating pride, knowledge of, and communication with, Greek artists among the Greek-American residents of New York City. In addition, HANAC has been able to make direct contact with several Greek artists, and has asked them to submit suitable designs for a community mural which will be painted on the surface of a huge cement archway (Hell's Gate Tressel) in Queens. The mural will be part of the neighborhood Astoria Restoration project.

During the second year with the Voucher Program, when most of the allocated voucher money was spent on the internship and the NOEMATA exhibit, HANAC had no vouchers available for its summer programs. HANAC elected to use its own funds to purchase services from cultural institutions with which it had become familiar through the Cultural Voucher Program and purchased macrame and flower picture workshops from the Queens Botanical Garden, enamelling and paper object workshops from the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and a special program on aquatic birds from the Zoo for children in HANAC's summer camp program.

Henry Street Settlement, Inc.

Henry Street Settlement, Inc. was founded at the turn of the twentieth century by nurses who sought to assist immigrants in their adjustment to new lives in a new country. Henry Street has grown immensely since its inception and now operates among its other social services, a 24-hour emergency housing facility for homeless families, an alternative school, and an extensive theatre arts program. For many years, Henry Street has recognized arts programming as an important supplement to their social service programs, but its visual arts program suffered from a lack of physical space and funding until recently, when the Arts for Living Center opened. The new Center has extensive gallery and workshop space, and has been the site of more than fifteen Cultural Voucher Program projects since the organization joined the Voucher Program in September, 1976.

The Settlement has used the Voucher Program to maintain and improve the projects that it had initiated at the Arts for Living Center. Initially, Henry Street used vouchers to consult with staff from the Brooklyn Museum and Museum of Modern Art, seeking advice on how to make its own gallery more versatile. As a result of this consultation, the Brooklyn Museum was commissioned to design and build moveable panels for the gallery, and then a show of Louis Hines photographs of Lower East Side immigrants from the collection of the Brooklyn Museum was displayed at the Center gallery for the opening of one of Henry Street's theatre productions (which was also about immigrants). Henry Street hopes that the Brooklyn Museum will arrange for its Bedford-Stuyvesant Textile Exhibit to travel to the Center's gallery, in the fall of 1977, and a Puerto Rican culture show is being planned for the coming year by the senior group at Henry Street.

For a period of one month, Henry Street held "Open House" for a weaving demonstration-experience that was sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. The entire Lower East Side community was invited to see the weaving exhibit in the gallery and to try their hands at weaving on the large, 8 foot by 8 foot loom, which extended from the floor to the ceiling. Response to this communal weaving endeavor was so positive - 700 people participated - that a second loom was constructed and a similar event was begun at the Emergency Housing Project. As a result, many of Henry Street's constituents requested more weaving workshops; the Henry Street Theatre Workshop built small looms for the project, and classes were directed by a weaving apprentice associated with the Museum of Contemporary Crafts.

With the Queens Botanical Garden, Henry Street scheduled a series of horticultural workshops for groups of all ages. This program proved so successful that Henry Street decided to establish its own greenhouse. The Botanical Garden will be supplying Henry Street staff and constituents with initial technical advice about teaching horticultural skills and maintaining the greenhouse. It is hoped that this can become a self-sufficient program at Henry Street.

Jewish Association for Services for the Aged

JASA is a social service agency which seeks to meet the social, cultural, and personal needs necessary for maintaining New York City's elderly in the communities in which they live. JASA offers legal assistance, counselling, group recreational programs, and hot lunches for its constituents; JASA also operates two senior citizen housing developments. The 4,000 elderly people served by JASA live in twenty target areas throughout Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Manhattan. There are a total of twenty-four senior citizen groups belonging to the Association. In the 1976-77 program year, the organization's first year with the Cultural Voucher Program, JASA worked diligently disseminating information about the cultural institutions among its large staff, which represents the twenty-four groups. This initial task was complicated by the fact that JASA employees were on strike during the spring and therefore many of the projects that had been planned had to be cancelled or postponed.

A sculpture workshop for West Side Manhattan seniors began with an examination of artifacts in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History and proceeded with sculpting sessions for the seniors at the Museum. The participants were so enthusiastic about the project that they came to classes even during the most severe winter weather. The workshop culminated with a gallery exhibit of the paintings, sculpture, and pottery at the Museum's "People's Center" during June, 1977, and this exhibit was featured during Senior Citizen's Day, when New York City's senior citizens were invited to come and celebrate at the Museum. Curators from the Museum designed the display for the exhibit of animals and objects. JASA plans to send the exhibit to banks in the seniors' local community.

A senior citizens group from Astoria asked the American Museum of Natural History to sponsor a lecture and discussion series on cross-cultural "Rites of Passage." The four sessions were held alternately at the Museum and at the senior center. Guest anthropologists and archaeologists from the Museum covered the topics of "Afro-American Rural Life," "American Indian Women," and "Africa and Aging."

Other senior groups have been involved with visits to the Bronx Zoo and the Queens Botanical Garden. The Garden has sponsored workshops in flower arranging and "after-dinner gardening" with some of the other centers.

Prior to the spring strike, JASA consulted the Brooklyn Museum about designing an intergenerational project which would give seniors and their communities more sense of their respective positions in a time continuum. With the senior center in Astoria, the Brooklyn Museum helped plan a project which was called, tentatively, "Changes in Communication: 1900 to Present." The project plans include series of dialogues between the seniors and elementary school children on the Lower East Side, about new inventions that have occured in the field of communication since the turn of the century. The seniors will serve as corresponding, "pen pal" historians to the children and will later meet with the youngsters at the Brooklyn Museum to survey communication changes evident in early American artwork and artifacts from the Museum's collection. The result of this dialogue will be the creation of a time-line mural, jointly created by the senior citizens and the children. Because the strike was not settled until the end of the school year, the completion of this project was delayed, but JASA intends to make this project a reality during the fall of 1977.

Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults

The Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults is a comprehensive service program for senior citizens in the Jamaica, Queens area which includes twelve separate senior citizens centers. Unlike the constituency of the Heights and Hill Community Council, the elderly in these centers are mostly active, and major program decisions are made by a council of senior citizens composed of representatives elected by each center.

Safe, reliable transportation has often been a problem for the seniors of the various centers. The Cultural Voucher Program's bus has been important to them, for it has facilitated the groups' social and cultural experiences. As a result, the Jamaica Program has been one of the most active participants in the Cultural Voucher Program since it joined the Program in September 1975, and has implemented more than 80 projects during their two-year association with participating cultural institutions.

In order to make informed decisions on Voucher projects, the JSPOA council initially scheduled "Behind the Scenes" tours of all seven cultural institutions participating in the 1975-76 program year, and these tours were attended by approximately thirty people each. After these initial visits were concluded, the seniors chose to participate in many of the ongoing programs of the cultural institutions. In addition, special classes on various topics were arranged, and conducted both at the Jamaica centers and in the cultural institutions. These have included origami and silkscreening classes run by the American Museum of Natural History, jewelry-making and media training workshops sponsored by the Brooklyn Museum, classes in needlecrafts and experimental textiles taught by the staff of the Mew Muse Community Museum, basketmaking workshops with the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and Plants-as-Gifts workshop sponsored by the Queens Botanical Garden.

As JSPOA's familiarity with the cultural institutions increased, the sophistication of its program requests matured also. Several long-term classes have been sponsored, including one by the Museum of Natural History, entitled "The Geology, Flora, Fauna and People of Jamaica," which examined these topics as they related to both the Caribbean islands and the New York community. Another series of classes on the history of music was taught by staff from the New Muse. These classes helped the participants, many of whom are musicians, in their preparations for a Bicentennial Open House performance at Archer Center. This "History of Music" program was very successful, and JSPOA continued it during the second year at their own expense. Other resources of the cultural institutions were explored for the Bicentennial Project, and JSPOA employed (with non-voucher funds) the American Museum of Natural History to print and design their "Bicentennial Yearbook" brochure.

JSPOA has conducted many programs with the Queens Botanical Garden, including plant clinics, fluorescent light gardening classes and an extended class on colonial medicinal herbs. Over the past year, the Garden staff has been conducting a class for both senior citizens from the Archer Center and children from a day care center located in the same building. During the spring of 1977, the children and seniors planted a roof-top flower and vegetable garden at the Archer Center with the Garden's assistance, and harvested their "crop" during the summer. JSPOA plans to extend this project to other centers, possibly with additional support from the federal government.

The highlight of JSPOA's second year with the Voucher Program was a photography project entitled "Images on Aging." Staff and senior citizens associated with JSPOA are concerned about the negative popular image of the elderly, and decided to develop a project which would address this problem. A photography workshop and exhibition was undertaken jointly with the Museum of Modern Art, El Museo del Barrio, and the American Museum of Natural History. Malcolm Arth, Chairman of the Education Department at the Museum of Natural History --

-- who has conducted research on the aging in Africa, gave a presentation to the staff of JSPOA at a training meeting in June, 1976, in preparation for the project. Subsequently, seniors from the Archer, Rockaway and Allen centers participated in classes and workshops on photography, held both at the centers and cultural institutions. Photography clinics and darkroom sessions were supplemented by a mixed-media art appreciation workshop sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art, visits to a professional photographer's studio, and tours of the museum's photo collections, the senior citizens then used their cameras to record their own impressions of themselves and each other. The photographs together comprise a collection of beautifully sensitive images of aging, reflecting a powerfully positive view of what it means to grow old. Display artists from El Museo assisted with the designing of an exhibit of these pictures, and the show was installed at El Museo for 2 weeks, and then was featured at the Museum of Natural History during their "Salute to Seniors" week.

The Manhood Foundation

Located in Central Harlem, with offices in other boroughs, the Manhood Foundation counsels and seeks employment for ex-offenders upon their release from prison. Manhood also maintains pre-release centers in seven New York State correctional facilities, where inmates are counselled prior to their parole.

In the fall of 1975 and winter of 1976, during its first year with the Voucher Program, Manhood used the expertise of cultural institutions to increase understanding of prisoners' problems among potential employers. Manhood worked with both the Museum of Modern Art and the New Muse Community Museum in designing a circulating exhibition of photographs by ex-offenders. This show was first mounted at a midtown-Manhattan Manufacturers Hanover Trust Bank in February, 1975 and was shown at the State Office Building in Harlem also. As a result of these exhibitions, two ex-offenders were offered employment as photographers.

While incarcerated, inmates receive very little training in marketable skills. Through the Brooklyn Museum, Manhood developed a project covering all aspects of printing and graphic arts. Sessions took place at the Taconic State Prison, and the training was designed to increase inmates' employment potential after their release. The workshops culminated in an art show at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Center. Manhood intends to sponsor other skill-building workshops for their constituents, and is considering developing a workshop in broadcasting and engineering with El Museo del Barrio.

The two shows organized through the Cultural Voucher Program -- photography in the first year, and graphic arts in the second -- have been very important to Manhood's constituents, and the staff would like to open a store-front exhibit of inmates' art work either in downtown Manhattan or in Harlem. A permanent exhibit of inmates' work would bring an awareness of ex-offenders' abilities to the urban community, and make ex-offenders' positive contributions to society more visible.

In the course of counseling inmates eligible for parole, the Manhood staff is often in contact with the families of those in prison. Incarceration inevitably results in the separation of families, sometimes for prolonged periods of time. This is especially difficult for children who are not able to afford regular visits to absent parents. The Manhood staff therefore sponsored a series of classes in making animated films for the children of inmates. The Brooklyn Museum provided an instructor and the classes were held on Saturday afternoons at a YMCA in Harlem. The finished film, which included clips of many of the children involved in the classes, is being completed now and Manhood intends to show it to the children's parents in prison.

Another result of incarceration is that inmates develop unrealistic expectations of the world that awaits them upon release. Manhood's staff spend s good deal of time dispelling such expectations, and a videotape which graphically depicts street life, employment prospects and housing conditions would be useful in preparing inmates for parole. The organization has designed a project with the Brooklyn Museum to train staff members in the use of videotape, so that such films can be incorporated into Manhood's existing counseling service. This project is expected to be initiated in the fall of 1977, and if it is successful, Manhood plans to produce a film, titled "Inside Out," about the social problems that ex-offenders face.

Northside Center for Child Development

The Northside Center is a family-oriented child guidance center serving emotionally disturbed children and their families in the Harlem and East Harlem communities.

Northside began its participation in the Cultural Voucher Program in 1975. During their first year of participation, Northside utilized the resources of most of the cultural institutions in the Program. With the American Museum of Natural History, Northside scheduled four workshops on the subject of "Museums as a Community Resource." These were attended by fifteen members of the Northside staff. Thirty-six children in the Therapeutic Day School participated in seven sessions on the urban ecology of New York, and twenty-five parents and young people took part in tours of the Natural History Museum. The Museum also provided a series of dioramas from their Department of Circulating

Exhibits, to be shown on Northside's premises, and conducted an extended class on photography for children from the Day School.

With El Museo del Barrio, Northside conducted twelve mixed-media workshops for seventeen young adults, and a series of five slide lectures on aspects of Puerto Rican culture for twenty children in the Day School. A selection of original graphics from El Museo's collection was also installed on the premises at Northside.

A group of young adults from Northside participated in three tours of the Bronx Zoo, and attended a film workshop on animal handling. Artifacts were distributed to take back to the Center for classroom use. In addition, "Family Day" visits to the Children's Zoo and the Aquarium were arranged for children from the Therapeutic Day School and their parents on Saturdays in April, May and June. Children from the Day School also visited New Muse to see a plantetarium sky show and participate in a "See and Touch Live Animal Show."

With the assistance of the Queens Botanical Garden, Northside established a flourescent light garden at the Center. This garden was created by mothers of children receiving counselling at the Center and by staff therapists. The flourescent garden has allowed the mothers to interact with therapists and Northside staff in new ways, and has increased their self-confidence and assurance in dealing with the counselling situations.

In April, 1976, twenty children from the Day School visited the Brooklyn Museum to learn about sculpture. These visits enabled the children to see and play on a soft sculpture, "Playground on the Sea," designed for children with learning handicaps, and to see an exhibit of American Folk Sculpture at the Museum.

Northside staff utilized the exhibition and design resources of the Museum of Modern Art in preparing for their Thirtieth Anniversary Professional Conference. Museum staff members designed portable displays and mounted photographs of various Northside functions in such a way that Northside will be able to use the exhibit repeatedly. Included in this exhibit were needlecraft pieces prepared by teens in a workshop conducted at the New Museum Community Museum, as well as samples of work from other Voucher projects sponsored by Northside.

During their second year of participation in the Voucher Program, Northside continued many of the successful projects it had run during the first year, in an effort to further improve parent-child relationships for the families they serve. In addition, Northside developed new projects that extended and enhanced its clinical services. The Bronx Zoo scheduled a series of Saturday "hands on" projects where children learned about animal behavior and the handling of animals. This program, in effect, assisted Northside in broadening the educational horizons of these children by placing them in another interesting environment and complementing their book-oriented education about animals.

The Museum of Contemporary Crafts sponsored several workshops with Northside including a Banner Bee where fifty parents and children were taught banner-making and produced banners for Northside's Thirtieth Anniversary; an Edible Sculpture Bake-In; and a series of Crochet, Paper and Fabric Workshops in which thirty mothers acquired handcrafts skills that could be shared with their children at home. Northside staff felt the latter workshops improved the self-image of the parents.

El Museo del Barrio provided Northside with classes in painting and drawing, as well as a Percussion Instrument Workshop in which twenty-four students learned to make conga drums while they learned the history of drumming in Black and Hispanic cultures. Another fifteen of Northside's children learned to construct toys by participating in woodworking classes offered by the American Museum of Natural History. Northside's sophistication in cultural programming with the institutions also led to the development of a Multi-Media Arts Instruction Series with the Museum of Modern Art. In these workshops, the fifteen participating children viewed museums exhibits, sketched at various outdoor locations and were able to incorporate this aesthetic education in their art work during their drawing classes at the Center.

Project R.E.T.U.R.N. Foundation

Project R.E.T.U.R.N. (Rehabilitation Education Through Unity Re-entry Now) Foundation is a self-help treatment center for young drug abusers. The Foundation operates a 24-hour residential facility, which serves the complete needs of the individuals who are living there. Project RETURN also has a community education component which works with community groups to resolve social and environmental problems which contribute to the problem of drug abuse.

In treating the young drug abuser, Project RETURN has sought to introduce healthy alternative life styles to their constituents. The Cultural Voucher Program has made it possible for the Foundation to give its constituents the opportunity to learn marketable skills.

The Foundation has a darkroom facility on its premises which until it joined the Voucher Program in September, 1976, was used by only a few of the residents. The American Museum of Natural History was consulted about reorganizing the darkroom so that it could serve more would-be photographers. The Museum advised the Foundation on the purchase of equipment and supplies, loaned the organization some cameras, and sponsored photo workshops for eight months. About twenty people have been actively involved in the program and would like to develop their skills further in order to publish a photographic essay eventually. In the meantime, they are using their newly acquired expertise in the publishing of RETURN's recently established newspaper.

Some photographs taken by students in the Natural History Museum classes have been used in a woodshop project. The pictures have been mounted on plaques, and several of the photo-plaques have been sold. Others have been used by Project RETURN to disseminate information about the organization to families of constituents and the community.

After the blackout in New York City during July, 1977, the young people at Project RETURN who had taken part in a workshop on graphics and silkscreening sponsored by the Museum of Natural History earlier in the year, seized the opportunity to try out their skills and decided to create a "Blackout T-Shirt" commemorating that day. Using their knowledge of layout, silk-screening and marketing learned in the course, they were able to produce T-shirts within a few days and sold many pieces quickly. Due to this successful venture, Project RETURN's eager entrepreneurs hope to continue their T-shirt business into the coming year.

TIP Neighborhood House

TIP Neighborhood House is a community development corporation recently affiliated with New York's United Neighborhood Houses. It offers employment referral, recreational programs, and educational counseling to residents in the Bronx Park South community. TIP has used the Cultural Voucher Program to design skill-building programs for its neighborhood residents, and has sought to provide opportunities for their constituents to use these skills once they are acquired.

TIP was among the first ten groups that joined the Voucher Program in 1975, and during its first year, TIP selected ten pupils from local high schools to participate in a course on animal behavior at the Bronx Zoo. The sessions covered a wide range of topics and included photography, videotape, and drawing instruction, as well as films, trips, and discussions. Students were encouraged to develop their own projects and they received credit from their schools for participation in the project.

Nearly fifty community residents participated in a four-hour terrarium workshop held at the Lambert Houses Community Center. The Queens Botanical Garden provided materials and instructors, and participants were able to take their finished terrariums home. The workshop proved to be so popular that TIP, together with consultants from the Garden, developed a gardening program which culminated in the establishment of five community gardens during the summer of 1977. The gardens were planted on what were formerly vacant, rubble-strewn city lots in the Tremont section of the Bronx.

The gardening project began as a senior citizens project, but quickly stimulated the interest of the "Green Thumb" children's group and other community people. Together with the Queens Botanical Garden, they created a "year-round" garden near a senior citizens housing development. The group also rescued some ailing trees by planting flower beds--complete with attractive borders--around them. A vegetable garden was planted at the lot on Cauldwell Avenue, and the addition of chairs and flowers (planted in old tires), has created an attractive park out of a former eyesore. The Cornell University Extension Service has donated additional support to TIP's community gardening program by helping the citizens establish a model "intergenerational" vegetable garden at another site. TIP's "Fall Festival" will feature a bus tour of all the community gardens in the neighborhood for all interested neighborhood residents.

In terms of cooperation and community support, the community gardens have been TIP's most successful voucher project. Although the Tremont neighborhood has often been plagued with vandalism, none of the gardens have been damaged. Many children in the area have helped maintain the gardens voluntarily, and have become protective of them. In order to continue the maintenance and create other indoor and outdoor gardens, TIP has used its own funds to employ the Queens Botanical Garden to conduct a docent program which will consist of six teacher-training workshops in horticulture.

In its first year with the Voucher Program, TIP conducted a two-month class in African dance with the New Muse Community Museum for fifteen teenaged girls. The accomplishment of the students resulted in a performance at Wells College in Aurora, New York, during the winter of 1975-76, and several shows at local community events. More recently, this troupe was featured, dancing in costume, at the opening of the African Plains exhibit at the Bronx Zoo. The group have been continuing their classes this past year with an instructor from El Museo del Barrio.

Youngsters have been participating in classes in graphics, illustration, and creative writing conducted by the American Museum of Natural History since February, 1976. So far, their work has been compiled into two books of poetry, printed by the Museum and distributed in the Tremont neighborhood by the students. Their second and most recent publication has been sent to children's book editors throughout the country, and TIP hopes it will be published in a hard cover edition.

With the Brooklyn Museum, TIP sponsored a needle-craft workshop for senior citizens. Many of the participants were already skillful with their sewing needles, but this workshop was designed to teach them to use their skills in other ways. The workshops involved trips to handcraft exhibits. One such visit--to the Elder Craftsman Shop--has resulted in an apprenticeship for two of TIP's seniors, where they will learn marketing skills for their own products.

APPENDIX E

LIST OF FUNDING SOURCES

LIST OF FUNDING SOURCES

1974-75 Fiscal Year

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
Edward John Noble Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
SURDNA Foundation

1975-76 Fiscal Year

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
Anonymous donor
Chase Manhattan Bank
Robert Sterling Clark Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
Edward John Noble Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
SURDNA Foundation

1976-77 Fiscal Year

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
Anonymous donor
Avon Products Foundation
Chase Manhattan Bank
Chemical Bank
Robert Sterling Clark Foundation
Mobil Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
New York State Council on the Arts
John Edward Noble Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
SURDNA Foundation

APPENDIX F

PRESS ARTICLES

AMERICAN BANKER
NEW YORK, N.Y.
DAILY

JUL 1 1977

PERSONAL INTEREST

$150,000 Grant by Chemical Bank Continues Sharing of Museum Resources Throughout NYC

By FRANKLIN SMITH

NEW YORK. — The Museums Collaborative, Inc., which originated a program to bring resources of metropolitan New York Museums to city neighborhoods, has received its first major grant from the private business sector, a $150,000 pledge from Chemical Bank New York.

The grant will be dispersed over a three-year period for the organization's Cultural Voucher Program, according to Susan Bertram, director of the program. She said, "We view this not only as support for our program but for the city as a whole. At a time when public funds are straining to meet unparalleled demands, arts organizations need increasing support from the private business sector. Given the city's current problems, this is even more crucial here than elsewhere. With the Chemical Bank grant we will be able to continue the work of the program throughout the city and improve the cultural awareness and participation of its residents. The Collaborative also hopes that Chemical Bank's recognition of the program's value and significance to the continued cultural heritage of the city will encourage additional corporate banking."

The organization's Cultural Voucher Program, which is distinctive in the nation and serves as model for proposed an experimental stage for the past two programs across the country, has been in years. The program's original pilot grants from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts expired in June and the question of renewed public funds is still under consideration. The grant from Chemical makes the program's continuance possible.

Donald C. Platten, Chemical Bank's chairman, said the bank had been looking for a creative and effective way to support and enhance the quality of daily life in the city. "We wanted to find an organization with a grass roots program that believes, as we do, that the cultural heritage of this city belongs to everyone. In a year, the Collaborative's Cultural Voucher Program reaches more than 150,000 people from a variety of neighborhoods throughout the city."

The Collaborative strives to bring a wider range of people into contact with the resources of cultural institutions and to give incentives for development of institutional services that respond to the needs of new audiences. Through its Cultural Voucher Program the Collaborative awards money in form of vouchers to selected New York City community organizations. The vouchers are used to purchase services at participating cultural institutions which accept the vouchers in payment for services and redeem them for cash from the Museums Collaborative. Currently the program includes eight metropolitan cultural institutions and 15 community groups.

Representative of the variety of people the voucher system reaches are programs involving senior citizens living in the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn and school children in the Bronx. Aware that many of the elderly are afraid to be on the streets and others are frail and move about with difficulty, the Heights and Hill Community Council created a program that brought staff members of the Queens Botanical Gardens to the hotel lobby to give instruction on windowsill gardening.

In the other case, the students wanted to know more about animal behavior but did not attend the nearby Bronx Zoo because they didn't know what to look for. The TIP Settlement House arranged a special education program, combining the services of the zoo and the Museum of Natural History, for which the students received credit in school.

Participating New York City museums are the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, New York Zoological Society and Queens Botanical Gardens.

The 15 community organizations chosen for participation include: American Indian Community House, Bethany Family Circle Youth, Casita Maria, Crown Heights Community Corporation, Elmcore Youth and Adult Activities, Group Live-In Experience, Heights and Hill Community Council, Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee, Henry Street Settlement, Jewish Association for Services for the Aged, Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, Manhood Foundation, Northside Center for Child Development, Project RETURN Foundation, and TIP Settlement House.

Craft Horizons

April, 1977

page 6

TAKE PART IN ART WITH COUPONS

Imagine that a program exists whereby consumers are given free vouchers—like coupons—that they can redeem at the museum, zoo, or botanical garden of their choice for whatever cultural activity interests them—like weekly lessons in weaving or woodworking, tours of exhibitions or architectural landmarks, courses in modern art, ecology, or anthropology. Upon receiving the vouchers, the museum in turn redeems them for money from the funding agency that issued them. Actually, a voucher system like this *does* exist.

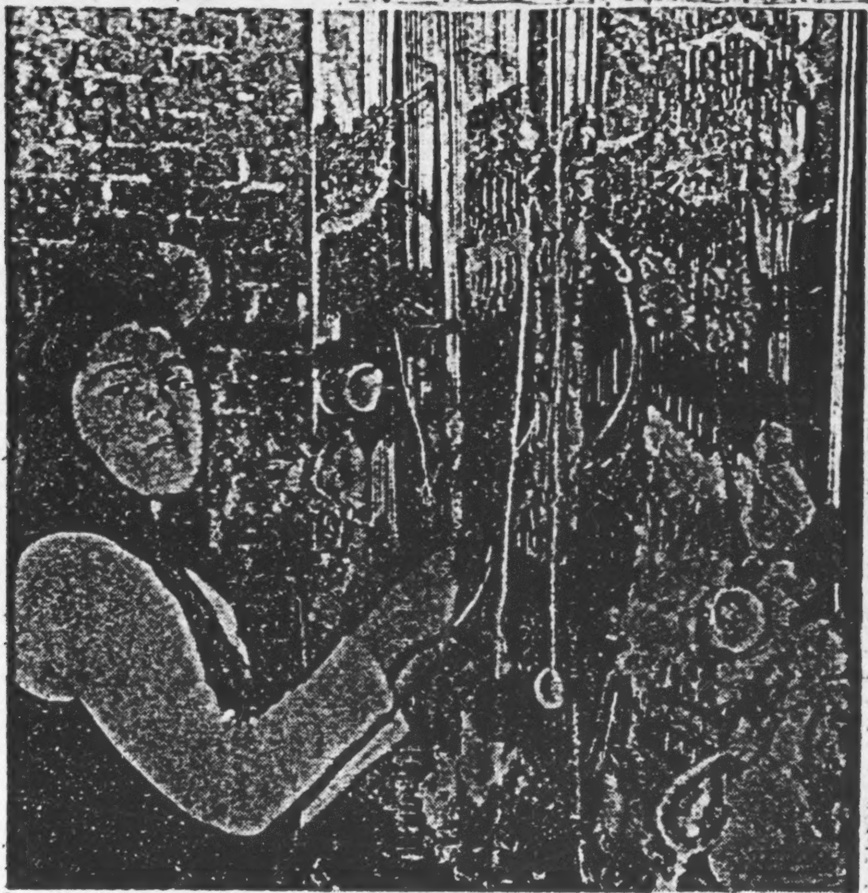
Museums Collaborative, Inc., a private nonprofit organization affiliated with the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, developed the concept of cultural vouchers and persuaded the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education at HEW, as well as NEA, New York State Council on the Arts, and private foundations, to support a pilot project. Now in its third and final year, this experiment involves 15 community groups and eight cultural institutions, including the ACC's Museum of Contemporary Crafts. Each institution received money to hire one person to act as liaison to the community organizations; MCC's liaison is Ann Loeb. Her basic task is to determine or develop programs that would be of interest to members of the community groups and work out the arrangements to see the projects through. The community groups were given a flat $2,000 for a four-month period, then additional vouchers based on their previous performance.

When Henry Street Settlement decided it would like to offer weaving classes, MCC's Loeb contacted fiber artist Gayle Wimmer, who served as artist-in-residence for three weeks in January. Wimmer used two large looms for teaching and also organized an exhibition of historic and contemporary textiles. Other projects carried out by MCC include: basketry workshops with Sandra Newman at the Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, workshops in soft sculpture with Lois Steinhart, woodcarving with Fred Wilson, and crochet with Nicki Hitz Edson at the Northside Center for Child Development.

The cultural voucher program is being evaluated for Museums Collaborative by Gary Bridge of Teachers College, Columbia University, who sees the following advantages of such a system: (1) a broader range of people come in contact with cultural institutions; (2) "consumers" learn more from their experiences because they *choose* them; (3) the public's support for cultural institutions increases; (4) institutions become more responsive to public needs; (5) communication among institutions increases as competition forces them to know what others are offering the public; (6) and a built-in mechanism guarantees that public funds are spent in a way that best satisfies the public's needs.

The enthusiasm of both museums and the public for New York's pilot project suggests that cultural vouchers may be one of the most effective ways to support the arts.

NEW YORK POST, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1977



Post photo by Jerry Engel

Cara Muhlhahn: Oh what colors they weave.

Where there's room to loom

By SUSAN ROGERS GIDDINS

THE TWO LARGE looms in the window of the Henry Street Settlement House Gallery for three weeks attracted more than 700 visitors, some of whom sat right down and started weaving.

"Many people have never had the chance to stand in front of a loom, and a lot of them realized for the first time that there is a relation between the loom and the clothes they wear," said Cara Muhlhahn, a Hunter College instructor who was finishing off an 8 foot weaving for display in the lower lobby of the Arts for Living Center at Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. on the Lower East Side.

Each loom accommodated about eight weavers, four on each side of the double warp or lengthwise strand. The 8 by 8 foot loom frames were made by the scenic department of Settlement House's theater group. Originally there was only one loom, but a second was added when too many visitors became weavers.

tions in 3-D. Keys, bits of pottery, crocheting, a variety of scrap material, and objects such as plastic bags and strips of oilcloth jut out from the main woven piece.

The project came about with a $1000 grant from Museum Collaboratives, Inc. which calls itself a "culture voucher program," funding museums, such as the Contemporary Crafts Museum and organizations such as the Queens Botanical Gardens. It also aids community groups, such as the Henry Street Settlement House and the Bronx Community Center.

The Collaboratives Ann Loeb works at the Crafts Museum thinking up projects like the group weaving. She found weaver Gayle Wimmer and her apprentice Cara

residents of that area but the general public is also welcomed. For information about programs at the Arts for Living Center, telephone 766-9334.

The Settlement House began 85 years ago with a group of nurses visiting immigrants in the neighborhood, helping them learn to cope with American life. It now offers Spanish-English classes and recently began a Yiddish program which, according to Mrs. Skylar, has mostly black and Puerto Rican enrollees.

"Many people have never had the chance to stand in front of a loom, and a lot of them realized for the first time that there is a relation between the loom and the clothes they wear," said Cara Muhlhahn, a Hunter College instructor who was finishing off an 8 foot weaving for display in the lower lobby of the Arts for Living Center at Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St, on the Lower East Side.

Each loom accommodated about eight weavers, four on each side of the double warp or lengthwise strand. The 8 by 8 foot loom frames were made by the scenic department of Settlement House's theater group. Originally there was only one loom, but a second was added when too many visitors became weavers.

"We've had groups work on projects like a mural but nothing like this with so many people working on one particular thing," said Beth Skylar, overseer of the weaving project. Some 200 neighborhood school children, 300 more from a Settlement House arts and pottery program for 8 to 12-year-olds, 60 teens and 100 adults were involved.

* * *

Interest in weaving is now so stirred up that Mrs. Skylar has requested the scenic department hammer together 20 small individual looms for more weaving.

"The concept of weaving becomes so real to some people after working on this that they want to do bags or rugs," she said.

tions in 3-D. Keys, bits of pottery, crocheting, a variety of scrap material, and objects such as plastic bags and strips of oilcloth jut out from the main woven piece.

The project came about with a $1000 grant from Museum Collaboratives, Inc. which calls itself a "culture voucher program," funding museums, such as the Contemporary Crafts Museum and organizations such as the Queens Botanical Gardens. It also aids community groups, such as the Henry Street Settlement House and the Bronx Community Center.

The Collaboratives Ann Loeb works at the Crafts Museum thinking up projects like the group weaving. She found weaver Gayle Wimmer and her apprentice Cara Muhlhahn for the project. Miss Wimmer is now in Tennessee supervising a show of her work.

On a recent afternoon Miss Muhlhahn began to snip the strands of the warp and work them into the finished weaving. "We put up bits of color—red, yellow and black—to suggest a color scheme but everyone went his own way," she said, pointing to the boxes of yarn and cloth scraps. Works of Miss Wimmer's students at Hunter College line the gallery walls—on exhibit and for sale.

* * *

The Arts for Living Center has programs in music, dance, drama, art, and pottery, all related to the Henry Street Settlement House which serves the area south of 14th residents of that area but the general public is also welcomed. For information about programs at the Arts for Living Center, telephone 766-9334.

The Settlement House began 85 years ago with a group of nurses visiting immigrants in the neighborhood, helping them learn to cope with American life. It now offers Spanish-English classes and recently began a Yiddish program which, according to Mrs. Skylar, has mostly black and Puerto Rican enrollees.

Working with plants, in a program run by the Queens Botanical Garden

Getting it On With Culture

Terry Wolfe

New York is a cultural smorgasbord. The only trouble is that too few people get to sample the goodies. A splendid experiment, the Cultural Voucher Program, will hopefully give everyone a taste. It is now bringing eight city cultural institutions into mutually satisfying relationships with 15 community organizations, a representative sampling of ethnic and geographical communities in the New York galaxy.

At the moment, the three-year pilot-study is in its last and most crucial year. It will be institutionalized if evaluated a success. Funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, the State Council on the Arts, and (the largest contributor) the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In total, this amounts to about $600,000 for all three years. New York City has contributed space for the program's headquarters, which is located in the Arsenal at 64th Street and Central Park.

In the Cultural Voucher Program, community groups receive the vouchers, much like individuals receive food stamps. The Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee and the American Indian Community House, for example, are paying the Brooklyn Museum and Museum of Modern Art to instruct their people in the running of an art gallery. Both groups eventually want to open galleries that will house the works of neighborhood artists. The groups pay for the museums' expertise, through vouchers, while the museums hopefully cultivate a new audience of museum-goers.

The primary goal of the project is to put a larger segment of the population in contact with cultural institutions. At present, most people aren't aware of and do not have access to the cultural richness of this city.

Many parents in prison found it tough relating to their children once released. The Manhood Foundation and the Brooklyn Museum developed a program, using photography and animation, to help smooth out a transitional period. Kids created animated films which were shown to their incarcerated parents. The parents' work in photography and graphics was brought out for the children to see. The results communicated a mutual sense of pride in each others' accomplishments and a basis for further communication.

Aside from the knowledge that is gained by the participants, valuable people-to-people contact is made. There are many American Indians, for example, living in the five boroughs. The Cultural Voucher program has given them the impetus to

SOHO WEEKLY NEWS
9 December 76
Page 9

coalesce, and to start a headquarters in Manhattan. Most were surprised to discover the existence of a large Indian population in the city. Apart from sending people to the museum to learn the art gallery business, Indians have decided to keep an eye on the Native American jewelry sold here. There is concern over the rip-off prices that dealers are charging.

Many elderly people in the once fashionable St. George Hotel in Brooklyn hardly ever stepped foot outside their apartments. Consequently, the Heights and Hills Community Council created a program that taught these people how to grow windowsill gardens. Staff from Queens Botanical Gardens came to the hotel to give instructions. In time, some of the residents began to venture out more, some even going on a field-trip to Queens. The savory pay-off came when the gardeners used the herbs they had learned to grow in their own cooking.

Susan Bertram is the director of the Cultural Voucher Program, and, together with assistant directors Holly Sidford and Haffiz Mohamed, coordinates all activities. They have worked closely with an advisory council made up of museum officials, in selecting both the participating community organizations and institutions, and in calculating the value of each organization's voucher. The 16-member advisory council is as heterogeneous as you can get. "Where else," said Ms. Bertram proudly, "can you find Richard Oldenburg (Director of the Museum of Modern Art) sitting next to Federico Perez (Manpower Director, Puerto Rican Community Development Project) at a meeting?"

Initially the museums were skeptical about what kind of programs the community groups wanted, and the community groups were skeptical of these institutions. The museums feared that the programs picked by the community groups would not be up to their standards. And the thought of having to hustle business was not appealing either.

Bertram's group and the Advisory Council found that when offered a choice, the community groups opted for educational programs, rather than roller derbies through the Egyptian room. As a matter of fact, of the 170 projects implemented between September 1975 and August 1976, 56 percent of all services were purchased for lessons in visual arts, poetry, music and dance. The museums were delighted.

According to Ms. Bertram, the program is a success. "By funding community organizations to purchase services of their choice from museums, the Voucher Program assures that ordinary citizens are served by the cultural institutions that their government supports. The results are

Continued on Page 14

Vouchers

Continued from p. 9

a broadening audience for arts activity, and increasing educational opportunities for the public."

Bertram hopes that other cities will soon institute similar programs. And of course she would like to attract a larger government subsidy to expand the program in the metropolitan area. Appreciation for our cultural institutions will no longer remain the elitist position of a few.

* * *

The 15 community groups involved so far represent about 100,000 people and are: The American Indian Community House, Bethany Family Circle Youth Development Agency, Casita Maria, Crown Heights Community Corporation, Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Group Live-In Experience Community Youth Program, Heights and Hill Community Council, Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee, Henry Street Settlement, Jewish Association for Services for the Aged, Northside Center for Child Development, Project Return Foundation, and the TIP Neighborhood House.

The eight participating cultural institutions are: The American Museum of Natural History, The Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, The Museum of Modern Art, The New Muse Community Museum, New York Zoological Society, and Queens Botanical Gardens. ●

CULTURE VOUCHER EXPERIMENT

Rough Beast Slouches Toward MOMA

Some museums were uneasy about the new program: Would it alter their clientele?

By Geoffrey Stokes

● The Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee, an Astoria-based organization that serves the city's Greek-American community, wanted to preserve and exhibit the works of Greek-Americans, but they had no idea how to organize an exhibit. So Penny Prattas commuted for several months from Astoria to 53rd Street, where she was apprenticed to one of the curators at the Museum of Modern Art. Now she is completing her apprenticeship by actually organizing a show at the Brooklyn Museum's community gallery.

● Many of the elderly residents at Brooklyn's St. George Hotel are too frail—and too scared—to venture into the neighborhood streets. As a result of an agreement between the Heights and Hill Community Council and the New York Zoological Society, the hotel's coffee room has received a special installation of tropical fish. Experts from the city aquarium have provided the residents with training in maintaining their common aquarium, and those who want them will receive smaller installations for their own rooms.

● Many of the teenagers at Group Live-in Experience Community Youth Program, a crisis intervention center and residence in the South Bronx, had been abandoned by the public schools as ineducable. At the New Muse Community Museum in Brooklyn, they began informal lessons in guitar, piano, and drums. Eventually, as the kids grew more proficient, the museum arranged for them to test their skills by sitting in with professional musicians whom the museum brought in. And when they wanted to learn more about music, many of these "ineducable" kids began reading

It works like this: Museums must cater to a new kind of donor—the working class.

These events—and 254 other exchanges between community groups and museums over the past year—are the result of the cultural voucher program. This three-year experiment is sponsored by the Museums Collaborative—an organization of the city's museums, zoos, and botanical gardens. The project is designed to, first, bring "nontraditional" (i.e., poor and working-class) audiences to museums and, second, change the way museums behave toward that audience. It seems to be doing both.

The voucher concept first surfaced several years ago in the context of educational reform. Some of its advocates were attempting to change the way public schools functioned, while others seemed more interested in demonstrating that a market mechanism could work in the interests of someone other than the propertied class. To that end, parents were given vouchers which they could redeem for educational services at any one of a number of schools, instead of being *told* where to send their kids. The better the school was, the more kids it attracted, and the more vouchers it could redeem for cash. Since school administrators ferociously pursue higher budgets, the voucher program was supposed to give them a strong incentive to make their schools more attractive. That, at any rate, is the way the argument went.

Museums have also felt the impulse for reform, partially because their traditional, awed, middle-class audience has been shrinking. Along with their budgets. So they too decided to become "relevant"—frequently with results as embarrassing as the Metropolitan's "Harlem on My Mind."

And so, through the Museums Collaborative, they began to spin out "audience development" programs. Most of

VILLAGE VOICE
8 December 76
Page 81

which didn't work. "Initially," says Susan Bertram, now director of the cultural-voucher program, "we tried to give the institutions some staff and money for programming—together with some technical help—but there wasn't much response. I mean, nobody had much of a sense of what it was the communities *wanted*. They'd never used the institutions; so there really wan't any data.

"So then we tried giving money directly to community groups so they could set up their own cultural programming, and that didn't work either. We wound up at the end of the year with a whole lot of money either not spent at all, which meant that it didn't do any good, or spent on stuff that was cultural only in the vaguest possible sense. At that point, we came up with the idea that put us where we probably should have been in the first place."

Armed with a grant from HEW's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, the collaborative gave each of seven cultural institutions a staff member whose job was, *not* to develop programs, but simply to work as a liaison with 10 participating community groups. Those groups received not money, but vouchers with which they could buy services—admissions, instruction, regular or special programming—at any of the institutions. The institutions could then enhance their budgets by redeeming those vouchers with the collaborative for cash. Simplicity itself, right? But not without problems. For some museums, even the lure of money wasn't enough to overcome their nervousness about working with people whose definitions of culture varied from the received version. "I don't know what they thought," says Bertram, "but I think they were really afraid that they'd be having roller derbies in their lobbies."

Museums have always catered to their donors' whims, but most of those donors have been either wealthy patrons or their governmental surrogates, neither of whom were likely to question the notion that "Curator knows best." The voucher program meant that the institutions would have to respond to a different class of donors, and even among those that wanted to make the effort, some simply weren't equipped to do so.

Thirty-three cultural institutions applied by submitting sample programs for a senior citizens center, a rehabilitation program for drug abusers, and an Italian-American community center. On the basis of those answers, the project's advisory council eliminated more than half the institutions immediately. "It was *scary*," one council member recalls. "Some of those answers were just unreal. They had no idea *at all* how people live in this city."

Of the 15 survivors, eight—the Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, the New York Zoological Society (the Bronx zoo and the aquarium), the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and the Queens Botanical Garden—were ultimately chosen. Though the collaborative's staffers regarded the mix as necessary for experimental purposes, the selected

Continued on page 83

Vouchers *Continued from page 81*

institutions were perhaps even less delighted than the rejectees. "The biggies were threatened because they thought community groups would all go to the ethnic institutions," Bertram recalls, "but the community museums were sure that everyone would ignore them and go to the prestigious places instead. And they were *all* afraid that no one would use them, but would spend all their money going to the zoo."

Wrong, as it turns out. At the end of the experiment's first year, the top two earners were a biggie and a community museum—as were the bottom two (the zoo was somewhere in the middle). In a classic demonstration of the virtues claimed for the voucher system, consumers had shopped around in some very sophisticated ways.

Not immediately, though. In the project's first four months—during which each community group received vouchers worth $2,000—all the institutions were sampled relatively equally. But MOMA was felt to be too expensive (as well as standoffish), and El Museo del Barrio to be, as one community-group officer put it, "a bunch of rip-off artists." In fact, El Museo had groups cancel contracts with it and go off to buy similar services elsewhere. Both institutions eventually changed their liaison staff and their programming (and seem to be faring better this year), but by September 1976, El Museo had worked successfully with only two groups and earned $1,701, while New Muse had worked with nine and earned $16,236. Similarly, though the Brooklyn Museum had garnered more than $17,000, MOMA had earned only $3,700.

Gary Bridge, a Columbia University Teachers College professor who is evaluating the project for the collaborative, sees the broad disparity in museum earnings as a strong preliminary success signal for the project: "Let's assume that there wasn't a voucher system and that El Museo had just been given a chunk of federal money instead. How long do you think it would have taken before someone in Washington finally figured out that they weren't delivering a service? And how likely is it—given the realities of politics—that someone would have pulled their grant? What you've got operating here is an instant, community-based, self-corrective mechanism. And, if you look at MOMA and El Museo, you can see that it really *works*; it changes the way institutions behave."

Increasing the Audience

Bridge is admittedly something of a true believer as far as vouchers go, but there are clear signs that the project is meeting its twin goals of increasing the potential audience for cultural institutions and modifying their programming. Remembering the somewhat disappointing results thus far of voucher experiments in traditional education, one wonders why this is so.

The key seems to lie in the nature of the cultural institutions' market. Though the experiment is limited to seven institutions, those seven are in real competition for the dollars. Conversely, when a group of voucher schools are all administered by a single school board, competition may be severely muted (in the California experiment, schools which had managed to recruit popular teachers away from their competitors were forbidden to advertize their success).

More than that, the cultural institutions' capacity for expansion is nearly unlimited. It's a rare museum that can exhibit more than a small fraction of its permanent collection at any one time, and the day-to-day costs of exhibition don't vary significantly with the number of visitors. If, for instance, MOMA is to open at all, it will have a certain number of guards, custodians, curators, etc. If the audience is enlarged by a hundred people who pay a dime, instead of a dollar, for admission, the museum hasn't lost $90; it's made ten. But if schools were to maintain that capacity by keeping a couple of fully staffed classrooms open regardless of how few students were in them, school costs would soar through the roof.

Finally, because the cultural vouchers were given to community groups rather than individuals, the concentrated dollars provided significant bargaining leverage. And, since wise museums see a practical purpose in expanding their audiences, these institutions have been quick to respond.

Broader Constituency

The political imperative is simple. Since more and more traditional donors are saying "I gave at IRS," the museums' survival depends increasingly on government dollars. Which won't come unless they have a broader constituency than Bendel's shoppers. And so the museums, quite sensibly, see the voucher programs as a way to develop that constituency. They certainly provide one way for government to fund cultural institutions without simply taxing the poor and working class to pay for pleasures defined by the rich.

No one is arguing that all government funding should be vouchered; the preservation of our past is too important to be subject to the trends of any particular historical moment. But, if the requests coming in to HEW from other cities and states is any gauge of the voucher system's success, it appears that a large chunk of the institutions' educational programs will be funded that way in the future. If so, we will—against all odds—have inched a little closer to the democratic ideal. □

New York Times
Wednesday, August 25, 1976
page 24

Cultural Voucher Plan Lures Community Groups

By C. GERALD FRASER

A modest yet revolutionary experiment called the Cultural Voucher Program is bringing some of the city's leading cultural institutions into working relationships with organizations representing New York's communities.

The community groups are designing projects that are useful to their members and they are using the vouchers to buy services and expertise from the cultural institutions.

The Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee and the American Indian Community House, for example, are paying the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Modern Art to train people in exhibition techniques and gallery operations. The two groups want to establish their own galleries to display works of their artists.

The community groups are receiving vouchers in the pilot project to pay for services of seven participating institutions.

Sources of Funds

The funds to redeem the vouchers, totaling about $600,000 over the life of the three-year program, come from the National Endowment for the Arts, the State Council on the Arts and—the principal contributor—the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The 10 community groups involved so far represent 75,000 people. They are: Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Group Live-In Experience, Heights and Hill Community Council, Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, Manhood Foundation, Mobilization for Youth, Northside Center for Child Development, Tremont Improvement Program and the Greek and Indian groups.

The cultural institutions are: Queens Botanical Garden, New York Zoological Society, New Muse Community Museum, American Museum of Natural History, El Museo del Barrio, Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.

The main aim of the program is to put new segments of the population in touch with cultural institutions.

Many elderly people who live in Brooklyn's once estimable St. George Hotel, for example, are frail and move about with difficulty. Others take to the streets fearfully.

The Heights and Hill Community Council, therefore, created a program that brought Queens Botanical Garden staff members to the hotel lobby to instruct classes on windowsill gardening.

Programs for Inmates

The Manhood Foundation works with men and women in prison and with those newly released. It designed programs to teach inmates' children to make animated films that will be shown in prisons. Other projects were designed to teach inmates silk-screen printmaking—a potentially saleable skill—and to construct a photographic exhibition that would include pictures of prison life.

The Museum of Modern Art provided expertise for the photographic exhibition, the Brooklyn Museum gave the film-making instruction and the New Muse Community Museum developed the printmaking project.

An unexpected byproduct of the photo exhibition resulted when someone who saw it in a midtown bank hired one of the former inmates whose photographs were on display.

The secondary aim of the voucher program is to encourage cultural institutions to come up with activities that benefit a wide segment of the population.

Museums Were Skeptical

When the program began to be formulated the museums were skeptical. They feared that community organizations would want to run their institutions. The community groups were skeptical too, asking why the museums should listen to them.

But a series of workshops was organized on what the museums and other institutions could offer and a 16-member advisory panel helped select the projects and the institutions that could participate. The use of vouchers instead of cash was put forward to bypass either actual mismanagement of cash or allegations of mismanagement, a charge that often plagues community groups.

When the proposals came in, the museums learned that the groups did not want roller derbies and disco dancing in the marbled corridors. They sought, said Susan Bertram, "serious educational programs."

Miss Bertram is the director of the program, which she, Cheryl McClenney, the assistant director, and Holly Sidford, program assistant, have devised.

The program is part of Museums Collaborative, a private nonprofit corporation. The voucher program receives an in-kind contribution from the city, which grants the program space at the Arsenal, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration headquarters in Central Park at 64th Street.

Miss Bertram said that cultural institutions had a responsibility to the public in return for public support that they received. So far, both institution officials and community groups regard the experiment as successful. Miss Bertram said that a youngster who belonged to one of the community groups liked the program so much that she had run away from home—to the Museum of Natural History.

THE DAILY NEWS

22 August 76

SUNDAY NEWS
NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

LOCAL NEWS AND FEATURES
HOME IMPROVEMENT
YOUR GARDEN
WORLD OF ANIMALS
CLASSIFIED

LIVING

in Manhattan and the Bronx

2

AUGUST 22, 1976

Museums Taking On New Tastes

By JOHN LEWIS

When a young man in the South Bronx with suicidal tendencies was asked by a community counselor, "What can we do to make you want to live?" He replied, "Find me a place where I can study guitar lessons."

Through the year-old Cultural Voucher Program, sponsored by Museums Collaborative Inc., a nonprofit organization, the man got his wish by being enrolled, along with a group of other troubled youths, in a music workshop at the New Muse Community Museum in Brooklyn.

Youngsters (above) tone up muscles during African Dance class at the Elmcor Youth and Adult Center. A puppet show (left) at Mobilization for Youth brings out the child in participants. The program, in operation since last September, is funded in part by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

News photos by Dennis Barna

Two Major Goals

According to its director, Susan Bertram, the voucher program is a three-year demonstration project with two major goals in mind—to bring a broader range of people into contact with the resources of cultural institutions and provide the institutions with incentives to develop services which are relevent to the needs of new audiences.

Funded by the Department of Health Education and Welfare, as well as other sources, the program awards money, in the form of vouchers, to selected community organizations in the city. These organizations purchase services of their choice from cultural institutions. The institutions in turn redeem the vouchers for cash from Museums Collaborative Inc.

The institutions participating in the program include: the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, the New York Zoological Society and the Queens Botanical Garden.

Since the program went into operation last September, after taking one year to set up, more than 225 transactions involving several thousands of persons have taken place between community organizations and cultural institutions. Cheryl McClenney, assistant director, said that many of the services contracted for were newly-created by the institutions to meet the interests of the community groups.

For Young and Old

"For instance, a group of kids in the Bronx wanted to know more about animal behavior," she said. "They had lived near the Bronx Zoo but did not go there much because they did not know what to look for.

"A special education program combining the services of the zoo and the Museum of Natural History was started for which the kids were able to get credit in school. They not only learned about animals but also their relation to everyday life."

In another case involving senior citizens living at the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn, the Queens Botanical Garden was asked to give a course to the elderly on window-sill gardening. The course was arranged because it was felt that many of the elderly were afraid to leave their rooms. Only about 10 seniors were expected to attend but 60 showed up for the first session.

"Six of the senior citizens are now attending regular classes at the Queens Botanical Garden," she said.

"The community organizations have also learned much about the interests and needs of the people living in their areas and many of the invisible barriers that keep people from moving from one borough to the next in search of cultural enrichment have been overcome," she said.

Wide Range of Organizations

The 10 community groups involved in the program represent an estimated 75,000 persons of every age, race and background, she said. More than 3,000 community organizations were contacted initially and an advisory council of prominent citizens selected those which could participate in the program.

"A wide range of organizations, large and small were selected," she said.

Among those chosen were Group Live-In Experience, a crisis intervention and counselling center and residence for adolescents in the South Bronx, and Mobilization for Youth, an educational facility providing opportunities for youth on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Northside Center for Child Development, a family-oriented child guidance and education center for families with emotionally disturbed children in Harlem; TIE Neighborhood House, a community development organization serving people of all ages in the Tremont area of the Bronx, the Manhood Foundation, a citywide placement and counselling agency serving inmates and ex-offenders, located in Harlem.

Other groups chosen were: The American Indian Community House in Manhattan; Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Queens; Heights and Hill Community Council, Brooklyn; Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Commitee in Astoria and the Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults.

Expires Next June?

The project is due to expire next June when the federal government ends its share of funding, amounting to $100,000. Museums Collaborative Inc. is hoping that the program will have demonstrated its success and that the New York State Council on the Arts will take over the funding.

Recently, a youth who had enrolled in the program ran away from home. After being missing for several days he was found sitting on the steps of the Museum of Natural History—the place where he had attended classes because of the voucher program.

News photo by Jack Smith

Susan Bertram (left), director of Museum Collective Inc., has supervised activities of the three-year voucher program with assistant Cheryl McClenney.

SUNDAY NEWS

BROOKLYN

1K • SUNDAY NEWS, AUGUST 22, 1976

Museums Aid Communities' Culture Gap

By JOHN LEWIS

When a young man in the South Bronx with suicidal tendencies was asked by a community counselor, "What can we do to make you want to live?" He replied, "Find me a place where I can study guitar lessons."

Through the year-old Cultural Voucher Program, sponsored by Museums Collaborative Inc., a nonprofit organization, the man got his wish by being enrolled, along with a group of other troubled youths, in a music workshop at the New Muse Community Museum in Brooklyn.

Two Major Goals

According to its director Susan Bertram, the voucher program is a three-year demonstration project with two major goals in mind—to bring a broader range of people into contact with the resources of cultural institutions and provide the institutions with incentives to develop services which are relevent to the needs of new audiences.

Funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, as well as other sources, the program awards money, in the form of vouchers, to selected community organizations in the city. These organizations purchase services of their choice from cultural institutions. The institutions in turn redeem the vouchers for cash from Museums Collaborative Inc.

The institutions participating in the program include: the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, the New York Zoological Society and the Queens Botanical Garden.

Since the program went into operation last September, after taking one year to set up over 225 transactions involving several thousands of persons have taken place between community organizations and cultural institutions. Cheryl McClenney, assistant director, said that many of the services contracted for were newly-created by the institutions to meet the interests of the community groups.

For Young and Old

"For instance, a group of kids in the Bronx wanted to know more about animal behavior," she said." They had lived near the Bronx Zoo but did not go there much because they did not know what to look for.

"A special education program combining the services of the zoo and the Museum of Natural History was started for which the kids were able to get credit in school. They not only learned about animals but also their relation to everyday life."

In another case involving senior citizens living at the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn, the Queens Botanical Garden was asked to give a course to the elderly on window-sill gardening. The course was arranged because it was felt that many of the elderly were afraid to leave their rooms. Only about 10 seniors were expected to attend but 60 showed up the first session.

"Six of the senior citizens are now attending regular classes at the Queens Botanical Garden," she said.

"The community organizations have also learned much about the interests and needs of the people living in their areas and many of the invisible barriers that keep people from moving from one borough to the next in search of cultural enrichment have been overcome," she said.

Wide Range of Organizations

The 10 community groups involved in the program represent an estimated 75,000 persons of every age, race and background, she said. More than 3,000 community organizations were contacted initially and an advisory council of prominent citizens selected those which could participate in the program.

"A wide range of organizations, large and small were selected," she said.

Among those chosen were Group Live-In Experience, a crisis intervention and counselling center and residence for adolescents in the South Bronx, and Mobilization for Youth, an educational faculty providing opportunities for youth on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The project is due to expire next June when the federal government ends its share of funding, amounting to $100,000. Museums Collaborative Inc. is hoping that the program will have demonstrated its success and that the New York State Council on the Arts will take over the funding.

News photo by Jack Smith

Susan Bertram (left), director of Museum Collective Inc., discusses activities with assistant Cheryl McClenney.

How to reach people: 'cultural vouchers'

By Diana Loercher

New York

If the people won't come to the museum then the museum must go to the people.

That's the basic philosophy of the Cultural Voucher Program. The voucher is given by agencies to people, who sue them in museums and like places, and redeemed by institutions for funds. It has social precedent in the form of the food stamp program, for example, but is unique in the cultural arena.

The point of the voucher system is that it gives the citizen some control over the nature of services available to him. The Cultural Voucher Program sprang into being because of the increasing demand of cultural institutions for government aid and the difficulty in allocating these funds. In the last decade state subsidies to the arts have risen from $1.7 million to $55 million and federal appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts from $2.5 million in 1966 to almost $75 million in 1975.

The program is a pilot project originated last year by Museums Collaborative, Inc., an affiliate of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of New York, and funded with $60,000 by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The director of the program, Susan Bertram, explained that since public money is being used more and more to support cultural institutions, the public on all economic levels should have an influence upon supply and demand.

Two objectives

Fundamentally democratic and anti-elitist in its philosophy, "the project," according to Miss Bertram, "has two major objectives. The first is to bring a broader range of people into contact with the educational programs of cultural institutions, and the second is to provide the institutions with incentives to develop programs which are responsive to the needs of a wider audience."

Ten community organizations serving an estimated 75,000 people not reached by existing cultural programs have received vouchers to develop educational projects with seven museums. Among the groups, which for the first time were able to start their own programs, were the American Indian Community House, Group Live-In Experience (a crisis center for adolescents in the South Bronx), the Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, and the Manhood Foundation (a counseling agency for prison inmates and ex-offenders). The groups they work with are the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, El Museo del Barrio, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, the New York Zoological Society, and the Queens Botanical Garden.

Expansion planned

Because of the success of the program, Miss Bertram is hoping to expand it with three more museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and five more community organizations. Between September of 1975 and June, 1976, 180 projects were undertaken and the amount of voucher money earned ranged from $400 to $11,500. Of the people in the community groups, 65 percent were interested in learning concrete skills. "They go to learn rather than to be entertained," commented Miss Bertram. "They're more serious than the middle-class or upper-middle class."

Courses in African culture, photography, art, gardening, dance, and instruction in musical instruments are particularly popular, and the benefits are often far-reaching, geographically and emotionally. Children who have never even been out of their neighborhood, never mind to a museum, are now learning to play musical instruments at the New Muse Community Museum in Brooklyn, and a film on the program shows an 11-year-old suicidal, alcoholic boy who regained the will to live by learning to play the guitar. Examples of other projects include a trip to the Bronx zoo for children from Harlem and their parents and the establishment of a cultural center in the Greek community.

By Dennis Barna

Mural making class, one result of the new cultural-voucher being used by museums

NEW YORK POST

21 June 76
Page 27

By J. B. ALEXANDER

Daily Closeup

A LOT TO OFFER

BERTRAM

Susan Bertram, the director of Museums Collaborative Inc., a tall, pale woman with green eyes, sat on the corner of a flower-print sofa in the modest midtown office of a publicist-friend, borrowed for the purposes of an interview. Her own office, a few blocks away at 830 Fifth Av., is similar in size, she explained, "but I share it with my two associates."

Her office is "very small," but she wasn't complaining. It's provided free by the city, since Museums Collaborative is an affiliate of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Funded by both government and private institutions under a three-year, $300,000 grant, Museums Collaborative's purpose is to draw community groups to museums. But, more than that, it is a pilot project that hopes to make museums—traditionally havens for the affluent—more responsible to the needs of the general community.

* * *

"The thrust of it," said Susan Bertram, "is to put some money in the hands of communities so they can tell museums what they want from them." This is accomplished through a voucher system in which participating community groups are given vouchers which, in turn, they spend for services at participating museums—there are eight in the program. The museums, in turn, cash in the vouchers at Museums Collaborative.

Community organizations in the program include The American Indian Community House, Inc., Elmcor Youth & Adult Activities, Inc. in Astoria, Heights & Hill Community Council in Brooklyn Heights, Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee in Astoria, and the Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults.

Museums involved include the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Muse Community Museum, and the Queens Botanical Garden.

Susan Bertram—she is single and 29—followed a familiar path to her job as an administrator of a cultural program. She had once been an artist, but, "all my paintings were very bad."

Her roots are in Minneapolis, where her parents still live. Her mother is a housewife, her father is a divisional manager for a tool company. She is an only child, and admits to having been spoiled.

After graduating from public schools she attended Carleton College, in Northfield, Minnesota, getting her B.A. in art in 1968. She came to New York that same year to further her art studies at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute, but after exploring galleries and exhibitions concluded that her talent didn't "justify the sacrifice it would take to be an artist."

In 1969 she joined the staff of the Museum of Modern Art as a senior program assistant and made several field trips to Latin America. Two years ago she became deeply involved in union organizing at the museum and led a strike sparked by staff insistence on a voice in the way things were being run. That dispute, she said, showed her the importance of allowing people to have a chance to be heard, which is why she is so keen on the voucher program of Museums Collaborative.

"I think museums have a lot to offer and I don't think they're being used as fully as they could be . . . they can be a tool to really teach people more about themselves, and in a less formal and less traditional way than a university or a school system."

But museums, she regrets, have been reluctant to agree with this promise. "I can remember sitting in a board meeting of one museum—that will go nameless—and having one board member tell me our museum isn't here about sociology, we're here about art, and the only kinds of things that interest us are things that relate to art work and the serious content of this institution.

"When this program got started," said Miss Bertram, "there were a lot of people who said it just wasn't going to work. They didn't think that community organizations would be sufficiently informed, they were a little suspicious that we would wind up with a roller derby at the Metropolitan Museum."

* * *

Eventually, doubts began to fade. "A lot of people are slowly coming around," said Miss Bertram. "People have chosen things that are not, perhaps, traditional museum services, but which are educational in the most basic sense of the word."

For example, she explained, "two groups, the Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Committee and the American Indian Community House, wanted to learn how to develop their own cultural center, so they're spending voucher money sending two interns to museums where they can learn how to mount exhibits and other technical things. The Elmcor Youth & Adult Activities is doing classes in African dance with an instructor from the Museum of Natural History, and at the Heights & Hill Community Council the elderly are learning windowsill gardening.

Museum News (the journal of the American Association of Museums)
March/April, 1976

Cultural Vouchers

R. Gary Bridge

This article is published under the auspices of a grant to MUSEUM NEWS *from the National Museum Act.*

Museums, zoos and botanical gardens, libraries and the performing arts need more money to stay afloat, even while growing proportions of their budgets are coming from local, state and federal tax monies. In the last decade state subsidies to the arts have risen from $1.7 million to $55 million, and federal appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts have increased from $2.5 million in 1966 to nearly $75 million in 1975. The National Committee for Cultural Resources has recently proposed that state and federal governments each supply 10 percent of every institution's operating budget. At the federal level alone, this would require a minimum appropriation of $225 million in 1976.[1]

Growing demands for public support of museums and the arts raise questions about how subsidies should be allocated. These questions become all the more urgent as inflation ravages institutional budgets and a sagging economy cuts income. Cultural vouchers may be the answer, or at least part of the answer.

The basic idea of vouchers is to give money to consumers so that they can purchase the services of their choice at authorized institutions. The money is awarded in the form of vouchers, which consumers trade for services. Institutions return the vouchers to the issuing agency, which redeems them for cash. According to this arrangement institutions receive public funds only to the extent that they can attract consumers; a built-in accountability system rewards productive institutions and does not waste public funds on unproductive or unresponsive institutions.

Gary Bridge *is associate professor of psychology and education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is a resident consultant to the Rand Corporation in Santa Monica, California.*

The voucher is new to the museum world, but "vouchering" has been tried in other public service areas. The federally financed Medicare program, which pays the medical expenses of certain people, can be viewed as a kind of voucher system, because patients are allowed to choose their own doctors. This is in contrast to a system that funds designated clinics and forces people to use these facilities. The Department of Agriculture's well known "food stamp" program is another example of vouchering. Instead of issuing foodstuffs to the needy, the government issues coupons that can be used to buy certain products at authorized markets. The grocers return the coupons to the government for payment. The important point in both the Medicare and food stamp examples is that the recipients of subsidies select their own suppliers of products and services.

Vouchers have received their most strenuous test in education.[2] A federally funded, five-year voucher demonstration in the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District (San Jose, California) has empowered parents of 10,000 children to select schools for their children from over 50 competing "mini-schools" which are housed in 14 different school buildings.[3] Teachers developed their own mini-schools and offered their services to parents in return for vouchers. Under this scheme the Alum Rock schools, which had virtually no diversity of offerings a few years ago, now have a wide range of instructional choices, from traditional self-contained classrooms to open classrooms, as well as schools that emphasize fine arts, scientific interests, multicultural experiences and bilingual instruction. About 22 percent of the students now attend non-neighborhood schools, and this suggests that parents are making active, not passive choices. It also suggests that they value the differences among the various mini-schools.

A number of school districts are moving toward voucher arrangements, and others are increasing family choice in schooling through other administrative devices, notably open-enrollment plans and "schools within schools" schemes. The idea of increasing consumer choice may be applicable to other public service areas, and museums may be a prime case in point.

A Plan for Cultural Vouchers

The voucher concept is flexible enough to support a wide range of specific plans. A radical plan would place all public subsidies for museums under the control of a voucher system, and no limits would be set on competition among institutions. A more conservative proposal would be to continue block grants to institutions but to invest a small amount of public funds in a voucher system, with strict rules about the kinds of services that could be purchased.

For the moment we will assume that any voucher scheme which could find political acceptance would have to be relatively restricted in scope. The idea would be to invest a portion of public funds intended for "cultural education" in a voucher arrangement instead of giving direct subsidies to institutions for educational programs. Once these funds are authorized, the sponsoring agency —which we shall call the voucher agency—must delimit a target audience for the educational program. These individuals or groups would constitute the "consumers" of cultural services, and they would be awarded vouchers in predetermined amounts. The vouchers could be used at any authorized museum, but to participate, an institution must agree to a set of basic auditing procedures and other rules formulated by the voucher agency.

Presumably, voucher funds would induce a number of different cultural institutions to offer services to voucher-equipped consumers. Some of these services would meet consumers' needs and attract voucher dollars; others would not and, hence, would not earn voucher money. This would signal the institution to modify its offerings. Unlike the recondite "winds of public opinion" that are generally used to gauge the acceptance of a service, the voucher scheme would provide an unambiguous indicator of how well an institution is doing.

One important feature should not be overlooked. The museum visitor —the consumer of cultural services —is placed in the role of *active chooser* rather than of passive receiver of services and programs. Active involvement is acknowledged as a crucial component of learning, and the active involvement that the voucher system would evoke ostensibly will make individuals more receptive to learning.[4] Moreover, consumers who have been awakened by new cultural experiences will be likely to demand more cultural opportunities. Presumably, they will reallocate more of their own discretionary funds toward cultural activities, and they will support institutions' claims to public monies.

In summary, the following advantages should accrue from a cultural voucher system:

1. A broader range of people will come in contact with the educational programs of cultural institutions.

2. "Consumers" will learn more from their experiences, because their participation involves active choice, not simply passive exposure. These conditions should maximize learning.

3. As the cultural literacy of consumers improves, they will form a solid foundation of support for cultural institutions. This will be manifest in two ways: Consumers will reallocate more of their own discretionary funds toward cultural activities, and they will support the cultural world's claims to public monies.

4. Institutions will have incentives to be more responsive to public needs, and, eventually, more creative and effective offerings will become available to the public.

5. Communication among institutions will increase as competition forces them to know what others are offering to the public. This will speed up the diffusion of innovations, and at the same time it will reduce needless overlap by encouraging institutions to concentrate on the services that they are most uniquely equipped to offer.

6. The market mechanism will establish a built-in accountability system which guarantees that public funds are spent in a manner that best satisfies consumer needs. Offerings that effectively meet people's perceived needs will prosper, and those that do not will be redesigned or wither.

Some Potential Problems

Cultural vouchers have the potential to revolutionize museums, but just as beautiful roses bear prickly thorns, cultural vouchers raise some potentially difficult problems.

First, as in any situation where money is involved, there could be the potential for larceny. For example, community groups might conceivably convert their vouchers into cash by demanding kickbacks from cultural institutions. Second, individual consumers or community groups might be unable to choose intelligently among available cultural services. They might lack the sophistication to know what they want, or they might be ignorant of what is available and at what cost. They could end up paying too much for too little. Economists refer to this as a problem of "imperfect information."

The third negative feature is that a voucher agency or its administrative equivalent would be needed to referee disputes and to guarantee an orderly system. Obviously, this administrative machinery would increase costs. Fourth, museums and other similar institutions might find it unpleasant to "hustle" support from consumers. How much nicer it would be to receive a single block grant of public funds without having to deal with a diffuse, heterogeneous clientele. And, finally, there are questions about the services that consumers would buy with their voucher dollars. Critics envision a nasty dictatorship of popular culture: roller derby games at the Metropolitan, motorcycle exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, disco dancing at the American Museum of Natural History. Alas and alack, vouchers might turn museums into the "cultural Disneylands" that Sherman Lee, director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, warned us about several years ago.

There are, of course, answers to these potential problems. Let us consider each of them in turn:

The voucher agency would be the key defense against possible larceny. This group's monitoring of transactions, coupled with a simple auditing system, would be all that is needed to detect abuses—and this has been proven.

The voucher agency could ameliorate imperfections in information by publicizing the services offered by different institutions, but the institutions themselves could provide the best solution to consumer ignorance. If museums offered attractive services, they would want to share that information with potential visitors, and they would mount their own public information campaigns. The voucher agency, however, might wish to increase the flow of information by issuing program catalogs, especially in the early stages of the program.

Obviously, a voucher system would require some administrative guidance, and the expense of the voucher agency seems warranted on at least two grounds. First, the expense would be relatively small, and the bigger the program, the lower the marginal costs of administration. Second, vouchers would generate new clienteles for cultural institutions, and one might reasonably expect these people to devote more of their own resources to the pursuit of culture and to support institutions in their competition for public funds. The administrative overhead of a voucher program should be viewed as an investment in an expanding cultural market.

The argument that museums would find it distasteful to "hustle" consumer support fails to recognize the realities of modern institutional finance. Museums fish for money every day in the form of memberships, admission fees, bequests and government grants.[5] Attracting visitors and their money is a reality of museum administration. When administrators voice concern about having to chase support, they might actually be expressing fears about pleasing a new, largely unknown audience, rather than the now-familiar circuit of philanthropists, foundation officers and government agencies.

Critics of the voucher idea fear that people would fritter away their vouchers on pop culture and the cultural equivalents of junk foods—easy to consume but lacking any substance or nutritional value. This fear reflects one side of the classic debate about the mission of museums. Should museums be storehouses of cultural artifacts or should their main function be one of cultural education?

Sherman Lee speaks forcefully for the former viewpoint. He sees an analogy between museums and wilderness areas. "Like a wilderness area, the art museum can be a reminder of standards, of what was pure and original. . . . To use the wilderness one must come prepared, stripped down to meet the challenge. This does not mean discriminatory exclusion from the Garden of Eden, but the necessity of meeting the demands of nature on its own terms and in such a way as not to deprive it of its naturalness."[6]

Lee makes no apologies for limiting museums to a "visual elite," and he argues, "It is time for art museums and for those genuinely interested in their survival and proper development to resist actively the chaotic demands forced upon them equally from the swinging set to moralizing Maoists." And he argues that even if a museum's charter "mentions the elevation of public taste, it does not necessarily follow that abortive, yet symbolic, attempts at mass education in 1970 can be really achieved by an art museum rather than other larger and more pervasive institutions or processes. Playing at education may well be worse than no education at all. . . ."[7]

One does not have to be a spouse swapper or a communist to think of counterarguments to this position. Two seem particularly relevant: First, if museums do not want to serve the public's perceived needs, then they should not expect the public to foot the bill for institutions' expenses. Second, if museums want the patronage and support of an appreciative, informed clientele, they had better develop such a following. If museums don't, who will? Obviously, some museum leaders operate on the assumption that the unwashed masses are not only culturally ignorant, they are uneducable and unmotivated to acquire an appreciation of culture. But this assumption seems unwarranted given recent evidence of the public's desire for cultural enlightenment.[8]

The voucher concept is predicated on the assumption that a large proportion of current non-museumgoers are eager to develop their sensibilities; the only way to test this assumption is to experiment with radically new, active education programs such as cultural vouchers.

Participant in a windowsill gardening program for senior citizens, sponsored by one of the community groups in the New York City Cultural Voucher Demonstration (see p. 24).

The New York Cultural Voucher Demonstration

Will cultural vouchers work? The only way to find out is to give the idea a try, and with this in mind, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare has funded a test of the cultural voucher in New York City. This demonstration, now in its second year of operation, involves 10 community groups and seven cultural institutions, including the American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, Museum of Modern Art, New Muse Community Museum, New York Zoological Society and Queens Botanical Garden. These institutions, chosen from over 33 applicants, were selected to represent institutions of different kinds and sizes and in various geographical areas of the city. Each of the participating institutions received sufficient money to hire one person as a liaison to the community organizations. In this particular voucher system, community groups rather than individuals receive the voucher funds.

The populations these community groups serve are not run-of-the-mill museum visitors. They represent an estimated 75,000 people, who, for one reason or another, are very unlikely to use the resources of cultural institutions (see Table 1).

Museums Collaborative, Inc., a private, nonprofit organization affiliated with the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, acts as the voucher agency. Directed by Priscilla Dunhill, Museums Collaborative developed the concept of a cultural voucher program, and successfully sought funding from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education at HEW, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts and from private foundations. Project director Susan Bertram and assistant director Cheryl McClenney are guided by an advisory board which consists of museum directors, community representatives, philanthropists and political luminaries.

The board's composition reflects two objectives. One is to bring

Table 1
Characteristics of Community Organizations
(Museums Collaborative, Inc., Cultural Voucher Program)

Community Organization	Size	Description
American Indian Community House	10,000	serves Native Americans
ELMCOR Youth and Adult Activities	1,000	community development organization; serves all ages
Group Live-In Experience	300	houses runaway youths
Heights and Hills Community Council	1,000	serves senior citizens
Hellenic-American Neighborhood Action Council	10,000	Greek-American social organization
Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults	45,000	serves senior citizens
Manhood Foundation	3,000	serves inmates and ex-offenders
Mobilization for Youth	1,200	provides educational opportunities for indigent youths
Northside Center for Child Development	1,100	serves families w/ emotionally disturbed children
Tremont Improvement Project	2,000	community development organization; serves all ages

Table 2
Summary of Services Purchased by Community Organizations

Approximate Percent of Voucher Funds Spent	Type of Service
2%	*Admission to regular museum programs* (including planetarium shows, zoological gardens).
19%	*Weekly lessons* in acting, drums, piano, gardening, painting and drawing.
10%	*Special tours* of architectural landmarks, zoological exhibits, "behind the scenes" of various museum departments.
38%	*Museum courses* in urban ecology, appreciating modern art, African art, African dance, African music, textiles.
29%	*Direct services* including exhibit design and installation, preparation of exhibit catalog; in-museum training in the installation of exhibits. Printing of flyers for community group exhibit; taping and preparation of videotape cassettes.
2%	*Staff seminars and workshops* (e.g., fund-raising techniques).

Community projects of the New York voucher demonstration served an estimated 75,000 people who, for various reasons, were unlikely to use the resources of cultural institutions.

together representatives of all factions that could make waves in New York City politics if they were excluded from the project; the other is to build support for the eventual institutionalization of the voucher program. Institutionalization in this case translates into money and political acceptance To continue without federal assistance, the voucher must attract the financial support and cooperation of cultural institutions, the city, and interested foundations and corporations.

The advisory board has been anything but a rubber-stamp group. It selected the participating institutions and community organizations, and determined the amount of each organization's voucher. Initially, all 10 community organizations received a flat $2,000 for a four-month period. Later, each organization received an additional voucher of $2,000 to $6,000 for an eight-month period, based upon its performance during the first transaction period and its apparent potential for developing effective future programs. In sum, the cast of characters in this project includes 10 community organizations, seven cultural institutions, each represented by a liaison, a small staff which acts as a voucher agency, and an advisory board which sets policy. Last year, two Columbia University professors, Charles Kadushin and Noel Tichy, headed the (external) evaluation team that assisted and recorded the project's development.[9]

The transactions between institutions and organizations are controlled through a simple set of rules which are covered in four forms.

A SERVICE REQUEST FORM is completed and signed by the community organization and the liaison as soon as they reach an agreement. This form describes the services to be rendered, the dates these services will be rendered and the maximum cost of services. If the proposed project does not overdraw the organization's voucher account, the transaction is permitted to continue.

After the services are rendered a SERVICE REPORT FORM is completed by the liaison and approved by the community organization. When received by the voucher agency, this form is an order to credit the cultural institution's account and debit the community group's voucher.

After the transaction the liaison completes a confidential EVALUATION FORM which indicates the institution's willingness to work with this organization in the future, its willingness to provide the same or similar services to other groups, and any additional comments the liaison has about the transaction.

At the same time, the community group files its own confidential EVALUATION FORM which indicates its satisfaction with the transaction and its willingness to recommend this institution to other community groups.

The community organizations and cultural institutions continue in this fashion until the organization's voucher is expended.

The results of the first round of transactions are highly informative, and they can be summarized as follows:

The seven cultural institutions varied widely in the amount of voucher money they attracted. One institution collected more than $5,000, and two earned less than $225 each. An institution's earnings probably reflect its liaison's efforts more than anything else. Some liaisons simply sat by the phone and waited for community groups to call, while others actively courted community groups.

The average value of each transaction was $366.56, but costs ranged from a low of $5 (the materials fee for a seminar) to a high of $2,000, the maximum possible.

In over half the cases, less than six meetings were required before a community organization and cultural institution reached an agreement, but in one case, 22 meetings were required before an agreement was finalized.

The evaluations of the transactions were for the most part highly positive; in fact, they might be characterized as rave reviews. There were, however, a few exceptions. These involved a cultural institution that attracted a great deal of initial interest and then failed to deliver, thus causing cancellations by community organizations.

One community organization attempted a bit of petty larceny (double charging in this case), but the project staff nipped this in the bud when they were alerted to the problem during routine processing of the service request forms. This experience seems to validate the management value of the voucher tracking system.

Table 2 describes some of the services that organizations received from the seven participating cultural institutions. It is obvious that the community groups did not use their funds simply to buy services routinely offered to the public (e.g., admissions to exhibits or performances). Many of the institutional services were explicitly educational in nature—they taught specific skills to people. Other services were aimed at making it possible for the organization to mount its own cultural event.

The New York cultural voucher demonstration has apparently achieved two of its basic objectives: It has broadened the population of people who are using cultural institutions; and the cultural institutions have been motivated to offer new services that they never would have offered without the incentive of the voucher system. Admittedly, the incentives are largely symbolic at this point because the amount of money changing hands is relatively small.

It appears that the community organizations have sufficiently valued the cultural experiences to reallocate some of their own scarce nonvoucher resources into expanded cultural activities. They had not done this before joining the voucher system, and, undoubtedly, would not have done so without the voucher demonstration. And, finally, perhaps the best sign that a successful partnership has been established is that additional community groups are asking to join the voucher project even if it means buying in with their own funds. These early signs of success leave some questions unanswered: Will community organizations change their preferences and buying habits as their members' cultural literacy improves? Can the voucher scheme move from a short-term demonstration to a permanent institution in New York? The next 12 months will be decisive.

In Conclusion

A cultural voucher system subsidizes museums, not by funding them directly, but by awarding money to community groups and individuals to purchase the cultural services of their choice. Consumers receive funds in the form of vouchers which can be used at authorized institutions. The issuing agency redeems the vouchers for cash. Under this system institutions that offer attractive services are rewarded; unproductive or unresponsive institutions must modify their offerings if they want to attract public funds.

(continued on page 64)

Jazz musician from New Muse Community Museum, New York.

Bridge, ***continued from page 26***

An effective cultural voucher system should result in: improvement in the public's "cultural literacy"; greater public satisfaction with cultural institutions; more personal spending on cultural activities; and greater public support for museums' claims to public monies. The early experience with a cultural voucher system in New York City suggests that vouchers are indeed feasible. Vouchers may prove to be the most effective way to subsidize museums, and they deserve careful consideration. △

Notes

1. National Committee for Cultural Resources. *National Report on the Arts.* New York: NCCR, 1975.
2. Education voucher schemes have been proposed by both political conservatives and liberals, although they typically make different assumptions about what vouchers will accomplish. See Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962, or "The Voucher Idea," *New York Times Magazine,* September 23, 1973. Also Christopher Jencks, "Private Schools for Black Children," *New York Times Magazine,* November 3, 1968; and Judith Areen and Christopher Jencks, "Education Vouchers: A Proposal for Diversity and Choice," *Teachers College Record,* 1971, vol. 72, pp. 327-335. The most detailed presentation of the voucher idea is a report by Harvard's Center for the Study of Public Policy, *Education Vouchers: A Report on Financing Education By Grants to Parents.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1970.
3. The Alum Rock voucher demonstration is described in Daniel Weiler *et al. A Public School Voucher Demonstration: The First Year at Alum Rock.* Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1974; R. G. Bridge. *Family Choice in Schooling: Parental Decision-making in the Alum Rock Education Voucher Demonstration.* Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1974; and R. G. Bridge, "Can Parents Play the Voucher Game?", *American School Board Journal,* in press.
4. See, for example, Richard A. Chase, "Museums as Learning Environments," MUSEUM NEWS, September/October, 1975, pp. 37-43.
5. According to recent financial reports, admission fees and membership subscriptions account for approximately 26 percent of the budget at the American Museum of Natural History, 14 percent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and 37 percent at the Museum of Modern Art.
6. Sherman Lee. "The Art Museum as a Wilderness Area," MUSEUM NEWS, October, 1972, pp. 11-12.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Americans and the Arts: A Survey of Public Opinion.* Research conducted for the Associated Councils of the Arts by the National Research Center for the Arts, Inc., 1974. Available for $12 from ACA Publications, 1564 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036.
9. For additional information about the community organizations, see Charles Kadushin *et al. First Year Report on the New York City Cultural Vouchers Program.* New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, 1975.